

# The Blue Beret

December 2007



**Bicommunal  
Hoops in Pyla**

## THE BLUE BERET

Published monthly by the:

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## Editorial

"... I am pleased to take this opportunity to thank you for all your hard work and continued commitment to our common cause during the last 12 months. Having recently returned from Headquarters, I am also very pleased to convey personally the deep appreciation of both our colleagues and Member States for your efforts.

The past year also witnessed trying moments for UNFICYP. Our thoughts are with the family and friends of our colleague WO Stephen Goldsmith, who passed away on 23 November.

As you know, the Security Council recently decided to extend our mission for another six months. In doing so, the Council again affirmed that the status quo is unacceptable, that time is not on the side of a settlement, and that negotiations to reunify the island have been at an impasse for too long. This has become, unfortunately, a standard assessment in Council resolutions on Cyprus. I believe, however, that far from an invitation to succumb to gloom and pessimism, this situation demands a renewed effort from all to find a solution. And I'm deeply convinced the time is ripe for that effort. As the Secretary-General wrote in his latest report, the coming year may prove to be crucial in the search for a comprehensive settlement. What this means for us is more hard work, a fresh approach to some aspects of our mission, and demonstrating that we are steadfast in our determination to help all Cypriots find a comprehensive and just settlement. I am certain that we can provide that help.

In the meantime, I ... look forward to seeing you all in the new year, re-energized and ready to take on the many challenges that surely await us."

*Excerpted from Chief of Mission Michael Møller's end-of-year message to UNFICYP staff*

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## Bali and Beyond: A New Green Economics

*Ban Ki-moon, 4 December*



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addresses the opening of the high-level segment of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali on 12 December 2007

We have read the science. Global warming is real, and we are a prime cause.

We have heard the warnings. Unless we act, now, we face serious consequences. Polar ice may melt. Sea levels will rise. A third of our plant and animal species could vanish. There will be famine around the world, particularly in Africa and Central Asia.

Largely lost in the debate is the good news. We can do something about this – more easily, and at far less cost, than most of us imagine.

These are the conclusions of the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the scientific body that recently shared the Nobel peace prize. It is sobering reading, but we must not miss its optimistic bottom-line: to repeat, we can do this – in ways that are both affordable and promote prosperity.

This week, world leaders gather for the summit in Bali. We need a breakthrough: a comprehensive climate change agreement that all nations can embrace. We must set an agenda – a roadmap to a better future, coupled with a tight time-line that produces a deal by 2009.

We do not yet know what such an accord might look like. Should it tax greenhouse gas emissions, or create an international carbon-trading system? Should it provide mechanisms for preventing deforestation, accounting for 20% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, or help less developed nations adapt to the inevitable effects of global warming – effects weighing disproportionately on them? Should it emphasize conservation and renewable fuels, like biomass or nuclear power, and make provisions for transferring new "green" technologies around the world?

The answer, of course, is some variation on all the above – and much, much more. If the negotiations bog down in the sheer breadth and complexity of the issues, we lose our most precious resource: time. In this, it helps to have a vision of how the future might look, if we succeed. That is not merely a cleaner, healthier, more secure world for all. Handled correctly, our fight against global warming could, in fact, set the stage for an eco-

friendly transformation of the global economy – one that spurs growth and development rather than crimps it, as many national leaders fear.

We have witnessed three economic transformations in the past century. First came the industrial revolution, then the technology revolution, followed by our modern era of globalization. We stand, now, at the threshold of another great change: the age of green economics.

The evidence is all about us, often in unexpected places. Visiting South America recently, I saw how Brazil has become one of the biggest players in green economics, drawing some 44% of its energy needs from renewable fuels. World average: 13%. The figure in Europe: 6.1%.

Much is made of the fact that China is poised to surpass the United States as the world's biggest emitter of greenhouse gases. Less wellknown, however, are its more recent efforts to confront grave environmental problems. China will invest \$10 billion in renewable energy this year, second only to Germany. It has become a world leader in solar and wind power. At a recent summit of East Asian leaders in Singapore, Premier Wen Jiabao pledged to reduce energy consumption (per unit of GDP) by 20% over five years – not so far removed, in spirit, from Europe's commitment to a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

This is the way of the future. According to some estimates, growth in global energy demand could be cut in half over the next 15 years simply by deploying existing technologies yielding a return on investment of 10% or more. The new IPCC report lays out the very practical ways, from tougher standards for air conditioners and refrigerators to improved efficiency in industry, building and transport. It estimates that overcoming climate change may cost as little as 0.1% of global GDP a year over the next three decades.

Growth need not suffer and in fact may accelerate. Research by the University of California at Berkeley indicates that the United States could create 300,000 jobs if 20% of electricity needs were met by renewables. A leading Munich consulting firm predicts that more people will be employed in Germany's enviro-technology industry than in the auto industry by the end of the next decade. The UN Environment Programme estimates that global investment in zero-greenhouse energy will reach \$1.9 trillion by 2020 – seed money for a wholesale reconfiguration of global industry.

Already, businesses in many parts of the world are demanding clear public policies on climate change, regardless of what form they might take – regulation, emissions caps, efficiency guidelines. The reason is obvious. Business needs ground rules. Helping to create them is very much the role of the United Nations.

Our job, in Bali and beyond, is to shape this nascent global transformation – to open the door to the age of green economics and green development. What's missing is a global framework within which we, the world's peoples, can coordinate our efforts to fight climate change.

The scientists have done their job. Now it's up to the politicians. Bali is a test of their leadership. What are we waiting for?

## Resolution 1789 (2007)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 5803rd meeting, on 14 December 2007

Welcoming the analysis on developments on the ground over the last six months in the report of the Secretary-General of 3 December 2007 (S/2007/699) on the United Nations operation in Cyprus, in accordance with his mandate,

Noting that the Government of Cyprus is agreed that in view of the prevailing conditions on the island it is necessary to keep UNFICYP beyond 15 December 2007,

Echoing the Secretary-General's firm belief that the responsibility of finding a solution lies first and foremost with the Cypriots themselves, that the upcoming year offers an important window of opportunity to make decisive progress, which must be grasped by all parties, in the search for a comprehensive solution, and noting the primary role of the United Nations in assisting the parties to bring the Cyprus conflict and division of the island to a comprehensive and durable settlement,

Taking note of the assessment of the Secretary-General that the security situation on the island and along the Green Line remains generally stable, welcoming the decrease in the overall number of incidents involving the two sides, and urging both sides to avoid any action which could lead to an increase in tension,

Underlining that activity in the buffer zone, in particular proposals for large-scale commercial projects, which are not compatible with returning to normal conditions as expressed in the UNFICYP mandate, should not be at the expense of stability and security; reiterating the Secretary-General's firm belief that the situation in the buffer zone would be improved if both sides accepted the 1989 aide-memoire used by the United Nations,

Welcoming the principles and decisions enshrined in the 8 July 2006 Agreement, stressing that a comprehensive settlement based on a bicomunal, bizonal federation and political equality, as set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions, is both desirable and possible and should not be further delayed,

Deploring the continued failure to date to implement the 8 July 2006 Agreement, and urging the leaders of both communities to act to start the process without delay in order to prepare the ground for fully-fledged negotiations leading to a comprehensive and durable settlement,

Welcoming the agreement to allow European Union funds to support demining activities; urging the rapid finalisation of the protocol between the relevant parties governing the remaining demining activities in order to complete demining of the buffer zone,

Welcoming the progress and continuation of the important activities of the Committee on Missing Persons; expressing the hope that this process will promote reconciliation between the communities,

Welcoming the proposed confidence building measures advanced by both sides, as a means of creating greater trust between the two communities and encouraging their early implementation; encouraging also

progress on measures such as the opening of additional crossing points including, but not limited to, at Ledra Street, taking into account the arrangements already in place at existing crossing points, and re-affirming the importance of continued crossing of the Green Line by Cypriots,

Welcoming all efforts to promote bicomunal contacts and events, including, inter alia, on the part of all United Nations bodies on the island, urging the two sides to promote the active engagement of civil society and the encouragement of cooperation between economic and commercial bodies and to remove all obstacles to such contacts,

Agreeing that an active and flourishing civil society is essential to the political process and expressing concern, in this respect, that opportunities for constructive public debate about the future of the island, within and between the communities, are becoming fewer, and that this atmosphere is hampering, in particular, efforts to foster bicomunal activities intended to benefit all Cypriots, and to promote reconciliation and build trust in order to facilitate a comprehensive settlement,

Reaffirming the importance of the Secretary-General continuing to keep the operations of UNFICYP under close review while continuing to take into account developments on the ground and the views of the parties, and reverting to the Council with recommendations as appropriate for further adjustments to UNFICYP's mandate, force levels and concept of operation as soon as warranted,

Welcoming the steps taken by the Republic of Cyprus to address the living conditions of many UNFICYP troops,

Echoing the Secretary-General's gratitude to the Government of Cyprus and the Government of Greece for their voluntary contributions to the funding of UNFICYP, and his request for further voluntary contributions from other countries and organisations,

Welcoming and encouraging efforts by the United Nations to sensitize peacekeeping personnel in the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases in all its peacekeeping operations,

Welcomes the analysis on developments on the ground over the last six months in the Secretary-General's report, in accordance with his mandate;

Reaffirms that the status quo is unacceptable, that time is not on the side of a settlement, and that negotiations to reunify the island have been at an impasse for too long;

Expresses full support for the 8 July process, notes with deep concern the lack of any progress, and calls upon all parties immediately to engage constructively with the United Nations efforts, as described in Under-Secretary-General Gambari's letter of 15 November 2006 and to cease mutual recriminations; urges all parties to show flexibility and political will over the coming months to make measurable progress which will allow fully fledged negotiations to begin;

Reaffirms all its relevant resolutions on Cyprus, in

particular resolution 1251 (1999) of 29 June 1999 and subsequent resolutions;

Expresses its full support for UNFICYP and decides to extend its mandate for a further period ending 15 June 2008;

Calls on both sides to continue to engage, as a matter of urgency and while respecting UNFICYP's mandate, in consultations with UNFICYP on the demarcation of the buffer zone, in particular in relation to the Ledra Street crossing point, and on the United Nations 1989 aide-memoire, with a view to reaching early agreement on outstanding issues;

Calls on the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkish forces to restore in Strovilia the military status quo which existed there prior to 30 June 2000;

Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on implementation of this resolution by 1 June 2008;

Welcomes the efforts being undertaken by UNFICYP to implement the Secretary-General's zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of its personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, requests the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and urges troop-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action including the conduct of predeployment awareness training, and to take disciplinary action and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel;

Decides to remain seized of the matter.

## Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Cyprus

S/2007/699

### I. Introduction

1. The present report on the United Nations operation in Cyprus covers developments from 26 May to 15 November 2007 and brings up to date the record of activities carried out by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) pursuant to Security Council resolution 186 (1964) and subsequent Council resolutions, most recently resolution 1758 (2007).

2. As at 15 November 2007, the strength of the military component stood at 856 all ranks, and the strength of the police component stood at 66.

### II. Mission of good offices and other developments

3. Since my previous report, my Special Representative has continued efforts aimed at facilitating the implementation of the 8 July agreement (see S/2006/572) through discussions with the two leaders and their representatives. Towards that end, the Coordination Committee, comprising the advisers of the two leaders and my Special Representative, convened six more times over the summer, and my Special Representative held numerous bilateral meetings with each side. The meetings were aimed at agreeing on the modalities for the implementation of the agreement between the leaders, in line with the procedural clarifications outlined in November 2006 also agreed to by the leaders. On 5 July, the Greek Cypriot leader, Tassos Papadopoulos, requested a meeting with the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mehmet Ali Talat, echoing the latter's longstanding position that the leaders should meet directly.

4. On the occasion of the anniversary of the 8 July agreement, I urged the two leaders to show the necessary creativity and political courage to move from talks about procedures to real engagement on substance. I reiterated the same message to Mr. Talat in a telephone call on 13 July and to Mr. Papadopoulos in a letter dated 8 August. The leaders subsequently met on 5 September in the presence of my Special Representative. While the positions of the parties appear to be within the agreed 8 July framework, no agreement was reached on the start of the process.

5. I met with the leaders in New York — Mr. Papadopoulos on 23 September and Mr. Talat on 16 October. Expressing concern at the lack of progress, I urged

both to move the process forward. Mr. Papadopoulos presented to me a number of proposals concerning the 8 July process and confidence-building measures. He also proposed the establishment of a civil society consultative body in support of the negotiations process. Mr. Talat presented a set of proposals (see A/62/499-S/2007/625) on confidence-building measures, including the establishment of a reconciliation commission. Mr. Talat also called for the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots to be lifted and stated that the Ledra Street crossing should be opened without preconditions. In mid-October, Mr. Papadopoulos submitted to me a revised proposal. Since then, the main differences between the parties have centred on questions concerning preparations for negotiations and the need for a time frame.

6. On 22 September, I met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, Dora Bakoyannis, in New York and expressed my hope that the dialogue between the sides would continue. She reiterated her belief that Mr. Papadopoulos was ready to implement the 8 July agreement.

7. On 29 September, I met with the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in New York. I expressed my disappointment at the fact that the meeting on 5 September of the leaders had not resulted in any progress. The Prime Minister agreed. He reiterated that it was important for the Security Council to endorse my predecessor's report of 28 May 2004 (S/2004/437) and for the international community to lift the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. I asked the Prime Minister for his support in facilitating the symbolically important opening of Ledra Street. He agreed on the importance of the matter.

8. In the light of various proposals made by the two sides, my Special Representative held a series of meetings with the leaders and their aides with a view to addressing the concerns of both sides, and encouraged them to flexibly engage, particularly with regard to confidence-building measures. Both sides proposed further openings across the buffer zone, including Ledra Street; a pull-back of military personnel from sensitive areas, particularly in Nicosia; and the cessation of military exercises near the buffer zone. In contrast to these positive signals, however, mutual recriminations continued to be exchanged throughout the reporting

period, undermining trust between the communities.

9. On 18 September, the European Commission published its annual report for 2006-2007 on the implementation of a €259 million aid package for the Turkish Cypriot community. The aid is aimed at helping to reduce the socio-economic disparities between the two communities and is thus an important component of European Union efforts towards the lifting of the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. The Commission's report concluded that the implementation process faced challenges, most notably with regard to works for upgrading Greek Cypriot property, a low absorption capacity by the Turkish Cypriot administration and the propensity of both communities to block projects for political reasons.

### III. Operations of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

#### A. Prevention of a recurrence of fighting and maintenance of the military status quo

10. The security situation in the buffer zone remained stable. A total of 365 violations and other incidents were reported during this period. This represents a decrease of 108 violations compared with the last reporting period. The pattern of violations broadly reflects those reported previously, including the completion of unauthorised repairs and minor enhancements to, and overmanning of, military positions along both ceasefire lines; minor air incursions into the buffer zone; photographing of the opposing side's positions; the completion of ground orientations by incoming troops at observation posts; limited incursions by the ground forces of each side into the buffer zone; and, most significantly, restrictions on United Nations movement at access points to the buffer zone.

11. Incidents reflecting a lack of discipline on the part of junior soldiers posted in observation posts along both ceasefire lines, as observed in the previous reporting period and noted in my previous report (S/2007/328), remain of concern. These have included incidents in which weapons were cocked and pointed at the opposing side. The majority of incidents have continued to occur where the opposing forces are in close proximity, in the old city of Nicosia. In this context, I welcome the proposals made by both sides for the pull-back of military personnel from sensitive areas, particularly in Nicosia.

12. UNFICYP maintained a close working relationship with the two opposing forces. As requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1758 (2007) of 15 June 2007, UNFICYP engaged with both sides in discussions on the 1989 aide-memoire with the aim of reaching an early agreement on its wording.

13. The situation in the area of Ledra Street remains delicate, as throughout the reporting period the Turkish Forces made attempts to exert control over an area of the buffer zone in the vicinity of the proposed new crossing point. In May 2007, the Turkish Forces moved south of their ceasefire line into the buffer zone in the area and cleared a section of Ledra Street. Subsequent Turkish Forces incursions into Ledra Street and the contentious "four-minute walk" area of the old city of Nicosia to the east of Ledra Street were reported by UNFICYP patrols. Tensions between the opposing forces in the area rose further throughout June 2007, during which time a section of the screen erected by the National Guard following the destruction of the wall that formerly blocked Ledra Street was broken. The National

Guard alleged that this damage was inflicted by a projectile thrown by a Turkish soldier who had entered the buffer zone; UNFICYP was unable to confirm that claim. Turkish Forces subsequently installed a video surveillance camera on their ceasefire line overlooking Ledra Street. UNFICYP, which is still negotiating on this issue with the Turkish Forces, protested about this action. UNFICYP continues to vigorously engage with both opposing forces to facilitate the opening of a crossing point at Ledra Street.

14. In the early summer, several areas of the buffer zone were affected by a number of serious fires. While all were effectively extinguished by UNFICYP with the assistance of the fire services of both communities, the proximity of the fires to the ceasefire lines and to mined areas threatened to escalate tensions between the opposing forces. The most serious of the fires occurred in an area north-west of Athienou, close to the Turkish Forces ceasefire line, and engulfed a mined area attributed to the Turkish Forces, causing some of the mines to detonate. Following that incident, UNFICYP and the Turkish Forces reached an agreement on the marking of a "safety zone" around mined areas and on the clearer marking of the perimeters of minefields.

15. In spite of the call to exercise restraint expressed in my previous report, both sides conducted military exercises. In June 2007, the Turkish Forces completed a naval exercise, code-named "Exercise Seawolf 2007", in international waters north of Cyprus. The National Guard held "Exercise Demeter", a logistics support exercise, in July 2007. In October 2007, the National Guard completed "Exercise Nikiforos", which included the mobilization of a larger number of reservists and was conducted on a larger scale than had been observed previously. Throughout the five-day exercise period, UNFICYP noted increased military road and air traffic on routes south of the buffer zone. In response, the Turkish Forces conducted "Exercise Toros" in November 2007, which was similar to the exercise carried out in 2006. In this context, I welcome the proposals made to me by both leaders for the cessation of military exercises near the buffer zone.

16. Turkish Forces continue to violate the status quo in Strovilia, where they have consistently overmanned their liaison post and have imposed constraints on UNFICYP movement in the area. Those restrictions have extended to denying UNFICYP access to its liaison post. UNFICYP access to and operations within the walled area of Varosha remain severely limited by the Turkish Forces. The United Nations continues to hold the Government of Turkey responsible for the status quo in Varosha. Tight restrictions applied by the Turkish Cypriot side on United Nations movement in certain parts of the Karpas peninsula continue to hamper humanitarian and monitoring operations in the area. Both sides retain observation posts, referred to in my previous reports (S/2006/931, paras. 14 and 15, and S/2007/328, paras. 13, 18 and 19), in violation of the status quo in the Dherinia area. The checkpoint in the Laroujina pocket, referred to in my report of May 2006 (S/2006/315, para. 13), was enhanced and was occupied on an irregular basis by the Turkish Forces in violation of the standing local agreement. UNFICYP continues to protest about this and to demand the removal of the position.

#### B. Mine clearance

17. Between January and July 2007, the Mine Action Centre retained a single team in the country and

operated at a reduced capacity owing to Mr. Talat's reservations concerning the European Union funding source for the project. On 13 August 2007, following the resolution of the funding disagreement, limited mine-clearance operations recommenced in mined areas not attributed to either side. Since then, the Centre has cleared a number of minefields of unknown origin, bringing the area of land released to a total of 415,566 square metres for the period under review. Discussions continue on clearance of the remaining minefields of unknown origin.

18. Negotiations between UNFICYP and the Turkish Forces to renew protocol terms for the clearance of the remaining mined areas in the buffer zone attributed to the Turkish Forces resumed on 22 August 2007. So far, the Turkish Forces have agreed in principle to the clearance of non-contentious mined areas attributed to them and the clearance of further mined areas which lie in the buffer zone close to their ceasefire line. UNFICYP continues to actively engage the Turkish Forces to finalize the protocol agreement. Once that agreement has been reached, the Centre will mobilize three more mine-action teams.

#### C. Restoration of normal conditions and humanitarian functions

19. UNFICYP, in cooperation with international partners and local stakeholders, continued to support confidence-building activities aimed at fostering inter-action between the two communities across the buffer zone.

20. During the reporting period, UNFICYP recorded 700,000 persons from both sides crossing through the buffer zone, while goods worth approximately C£832,000 (approximately \$1.7 million) crossed from the northern to the southern part and goods worth approximately £C178,000 (approximately \$356,000) crossed in the opposite direction.

21. As part of its overall efforts to establish trust among Cypriots, UNFICYP continued discussions aimed at facilitating agreement on the opening of the Ledra Street crossing point. In their respective proposals for confidence-building measures addressed to me, Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Talat attached priority to the opening of that crossing point. The proposals also presented the respective approaches of the two leaders on the opening of Kato Pyrgos-Yesilirmak (Limnitis) in the northwestern area of Cyprus. In preparation for the opening of this prospective crossing point, the Greek Cypriot side completed the construction work to the west of the National Guard ceasefire line outside of the buffer zone, while the Turkish Cypriot side conveyed to UNFICYP that it would consider this crossing only after the opening of the Ledra Street crossing.

22. During the reporting period, UNFICYP facilitated 55 bicomunal events in which 2,680 people from both sides participated. Those events were held at the Ledra Palace Hotel in the buffer zone, which continues to be seen by both sides as an essential, neutral venue for hosting activities involving the two communities.

23. Regular monthly meetings between Greek and Turkish Cypriot political party leaders continue to be held at the Ledra Palace Hotel under the auspices of the Embassy of Slovakia. As a result of the agreement reached on a range of bicomunal confidence-building measures, as mentioned in my previous report, party leaders played one football match and made joint visits to the Hala Sultan Tekke in the south and the church of Saint Barnabas in the north. Party leaders from both

sides confirmed that such bicomunal activities would continue and that they believed it was a positive step towards bringing the two communities closer together and an expression of their respect for religious and cultural sites in Cyprus. On 14 November, political party leaders issued a joint communiqué calling upon Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Talat to take decisive action towards opening the Ledra Street crossing. To that end, they expressed their wish to visit this area of the buffer zone. UNFICYP has offered its full assistance in facilitating this positive initiative. 24. During the reporting period, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through its "Action for Cooperation and Trust" (ACT) peace-building initiative, organised more than 100 bicomunal activities which brought together 7,500 Cypriots from all communities. Currently, UNDP-ACT funds 120 peace-building projects, which involve the participation of 135 Cypriot organisations and groups from both communities. In November, one of those projects, the Emergency Disease Forum, was used by Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot experts to organize a bicomunal meeting on the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease. At the same time, the UNDP programme "Partnership for the Future", through which funding is channelled to the Committee on Missing Persons and to demining activities, focused on infrastructure and rehabilitation projects and private-sector development.

25. Since my previous report, UNFICYP has conducted 62 humanitarian convoys and visits in support of the 384 Greek Cypriots and 142 Maronites living in the northern part of the island. UNFICYP has also continued to assist Turkish Cypriots in the southern part in obtaining identity documents, housing, welfare services, medical care, employment and education. UNFICYP continues to receive with concern reports about the demolition of Greek Cypriot houses in the Karpas, including residences of persons who had indicated their desire to return to the north. In this connection, UNFICYP has repeatedly reminded the Turkish Cypriot side of the need to respect ownership rights, including in cases where properties remain unoccupied.

26. The Turkish-language primary school in Limassol is still not operational. The formal proceedings of a lawsuit filed by the Cyprus Turkish Teachers' Trade Union in the Supreme Court of the Republic of Cyprus to guarantee Turkish Cypriots the right to an education in their mother tongue is ongoing and was last adjourned on 12 October. No date has been set for the trial yet. In the meantime, more than 60 Turkish-speaking children in Limassol attend the existing Greek Cypriot school, which provides Turkish-language instruction.

27. Management of civilian activities in the buffer zone outside the civil-use areas continues to be one of the main challenges facing UNFICYP. The mission is concerned at the steady increase in requests for civilian activities in the buffer zone outside of designated civil-use areas, particularly at proposals for large-scale commercial projects. If not addressed, that trend and the magnitude of civilian undertakings in the buffer zone, given the presence of the two armed opposing forces, will not only be unsustainable, but also undermine the mandate of UNFICYP to preserve the integrity of the buffer zone, potentially leading to a negative impact on security.

28. UNFICYP authorizes civilian activities in the buffer zone whenever it determines that such projects would not raise tension between the opposing forces or interfere with the Mission's operational requirements.

During the reporting period, UNFICYP approved 12 such projects, including the construction of a water reservoir for irrigation and the drilling of a public borehole in the area of Peristerona/Cengizkoy. UNFICYP believes that it is in the interest of all concerned parties to adhere to its established procedures for civilian activities in the buffer zone, and continues to call on both sides to provide support in this regard. UNFICYP received a legal opinion from the European Commission affirming that the European Union is obliged to respect the mandate of UNFICYP established by a resolution of the Security Council before the accession of Cyprus to the European Union. The European Commission stated that the authority of UNFICYP in the buffer zone allowed it to prohibit civilian activities in case of security concerns and that the *acquis communautaire* should not be allowed to challenge the mandate and authority of UNFICYP.

29. In the mixed village of Pyla in the buffer zone, UNFICYP continued working with the two communities, including on issues related to civilian activities in the buffer zone outside of the designated civil-use area. On 18 August, tensions arose due to an electricity connection by Kibris Turk Elektrik Kurumu from the Electricity Authority of Cyprus network to a network on the Pyla plateau. UNFICYP is continuing to mediate the resolution of this problem between the two sides.

30. UNFICYP continues to face difficulties in mediating on issues involving religious sites and buildings, despite continued appeals to the two communities to agree on practical modalities to address such matters. Following the meeting between H.E. Chrysostomos II, Archbishop of Nova Justiniana and All Cyprus, and Ahmet Yönlüer, the head of religious affairs in the north, as reported in my previous report (S/2007/328, para. 32), my Special Representative engaged with the two sides to establish lists of sites of religious significance to the other community which are in need of repair and restoration. Regrettably, these efforts have thus far failed to yield concrete results.

31. During the reporting period, UNFICYP facilitated six religious and commemorative events in the buffer zone and on both sides of the island. On 17 July, more than 1,000 Greek Cypriots prayed in the Ayia Marina Church in the area of Dherynia, and on 27 September 130 Greek Cypriots attended prayer services at the newly renovated Church of Ayios Neophyos, in the village of Troulli. In the northern part, on 22 July, 200 Maronites attended services at the Prophet Elias Monastery. On 1 and 2 September, about 300 Greek Cypriots travelled to Morphou to pray at the Church of Saint Mamas, and on 8 September, for the first time since the 1974 events, approximately 500 Greek Cypriot worshippers gathered for religious services at the Church of Agios Georgios and the Chapel of Panagia ton Pervolion. On 6 October, 50 Greek Cypriots performed a mass at the Apostolos Barnabas Monastery, and on 8 August, 650 Turkish Cypriots travelling through the southern part, visited Kokkina/Erenkoy as part of an annual commemorative event.

32. UNFICYP continued to liaise with the two sides on criminal matters and issues related to the crossings between the two parts of the island. Twenty-one medical evacuations were facilitated from the north and the remains of two Greek Cypriots returned for burial in their village in the Karpas area, in the north. Prison visits and interviews with inmates and relevant officials continue. There are currently 20 Turkish Cypriots detained in the south and 2 Greek Cypriots detained in the north. However, on the whole, despite the best

efforts of UNFICYP, no further progress has been achieved in establishing closer cooperation on law enforcement matters.

33. UNFICYP has improved cooperation with local authorities to combat activities such as illegal hunting and rubbish-dumping in the buffer zone, which represent a direct challenge to its authority. The mission welcomes the recent legislation prohibiting illegal dumping, as well as the creation of a Cyprus police Hunting Task Force, which now works in close cooperation with UNFICYP police to curb illegal hunting and bird-trapping. I hope that this cooperation will help prevent incidents such as the one that occurred on 14 November, during which hunters fired at a target some 5 metres away from an UNFICYP patrol which was attempting to remove the hunters from the buffer zone.

34. UNFICYP continued to encourage contact between the two communities on gender-related issues. Discussions were held with the newly appointed Gender Adviser of the Turkish Cypriot leader and with Greek Cypriot individuals dealing with gender issues. My Special Representative continued contacts with the bicomunal, high-level Women's Policy Group to discuss cooperation between the two communities.

#### IV. Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus

35. During the reporting period, the Committee pursued its bicomunal project on the exhumation, identification and return of the remains of missing persons. To date, the remains of more than 350 individuals have been exhumed on both sides of the buffer zone by teams composed of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot scientists. The remains of over 250 have undergone examination at the Committee's bicomunal anthropological laboratory in the United Nations Protected Area in Nicosia. During July and August, following genetic analysis, the first sets of identifications were concluded. As a result, 57 families received the remains of their missing relatives.

36. The Committee continued to benefit from broad political and public support. I commend both communities for showing the necessary respect in relation to the return of the first sets of remains — a significant and sensitive moment for both communities. I encourage all concerned to build on this momentum towards the final resolution so as to put closure to this painful issue.

#### V. Financial and administrative aspects

37. The General Assembly, in its resolution 61/280 of 29 June 2007, appropriated for the maintenance of UNFICYP for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 the amount of \$46.6 million gross (\$44.6 million net). In this regard, I am grateful for the voluntary contribution of one third of the cost of the Force, equivalent to \$15.5 million, by the Government of Cyprus, and the voluntary contribution of \$6.5 million by the Government of Greece. I invite other countries and organisations to do likewise, with a view to reducing the portion of the cost of UNFICYP covered by assessed contributions.

38. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period of six months, the cost of maintaining the Force would be limited to the amount approved by the General Assembly.

39. As at 31 August 2007, the total outstanding assessed contributions to the special account for UNFICYP

for the period from 16 June 1993 to 15 December 2007 amounted to \$22.2 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date amounted to \$2,479.9 million.

40. Reimbursement of troop- and contingent-owned equipment costs has been made only for the periods up to 30 September 2006 and 31 July 2006, respectively, owing to the delay in the receipt of assessed contributions.

#### VI. Observations

41. During the previous reporting period, the situation along the ceasefire lines has remained calm and stable. The opposing forces extended their cooperation to UNFICYP and generally refrained from actions that could disrupt efforts to resume political negotiations. However, safety and stability in the buffer zone continued to be negatively affected by members of the civilian population seeking to exercise their property rights in the buffer zone in disregard of security considerations and of the mission's mandate. In this connection, UNFICYP will continue to support civilian activities in the buffer zone in full respect of ownership rights. However, such activities will not be allowed at the expense of stability and security, for which the United Nations bears direct responsibility. I call on the members of both communities to respect the mandate of UNFICYP to maintain peace and security in that area. In this context, I welcome the European Commission's legal opinion which supports this position. I reiterate my belief that the situation would further improve if both sides accepted the 1989 aide-memoire used by the United Nations to regulate activities in the buffer zone for the past 18 years. It is my hope that both sides will accept it without delay.

42. Over the last six months, there has been no progress on the implementation of the agreement of 8 July 2006, although both parties continue to publicly support the principles contained therein, namely, that a comprehensive settlement will be based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation and political equality.

43. The broad outline of a solution is well known and will be based on the considerable body of work and basic agreements on established parameters already worked on over the past decades, on which either side may, indeed should, draw in the search for a future settlement. The 8 July agreement and subsequent agreed procedural clarifications are aimed at facilitating direct talks, not blocking them. Given these realities, it is difficult not to conclude that an important obstacle to progress is currently a lack of political will to fully engage. All parties need to show greater flexibility and greater political courage. It is disappointing that the meeting of the leaders held on 5 September did not produce concrete results and was a lost opportunity for all Cypriots.

44. I welcome, however, the various proposals made by both leaders containing confidence-building measures. Their early implementation would greatly contribute to an improvement in the atmosphere on the island. I would also urge both parties to put an end to mutual recriminations, as agreed between the two leaders on 8 July 2006, so as to ensure that the right atmosphere prevails.

45. As I mentioned in my previous report, it is my firm belief that the responsibility of finding a solution lies with the Cypriots themselves. The coming year may prove to be crucial in the search for a comprehensive

settlement. Only the required political will, translated into concrete actions, will provide an opportunity for progress and possible new initiatives.

46. An active and flourishing civil society is an important element in the process of overcoming a culture of prejudice and is essential to the political process. All Cypriots should be encouraged to become more active in that regard. The proposals made by the two leaders on the roles that could be played by civil society should also be taken into account.

47. It is regrettable that the ongoing debate on the lifting of the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots has become a debate on recognition. Recognition, or assisting secession, would be contrary to the resolutions of the Security Council. Rather, the objective should be to engender greater economic and social parity between the sides by further promoting the development of the Turkish Cypriot community, so that the reunification of the island may occur in as seamless a manner as possible. The maintenance of economic, social, cultural, sporting or similar ties or contacts does not amount to recognition. On the contrary, it will benefit all Cypriots by building trust, creating a more even playing field and thus greatly contributing to the reunification of the island. It is therefore important for all actors concerned to reframe the debate and their actions with a view to achieving this crucial objective in conformity with Security Council resolutions.

48. I note with satisfaction that the Turkish Cypriot side overcame concerns regarding European Union funding for a mine-free buffer zone. Notwithstanding that positive development, it is disappointing that discussions on the protocol governing the mine clearance that remains to be done are not proceeding as quickly as envisaged. I would therefore urge that this issue be resolved as soon as possible in order to operationalize the Turkish Cypriot and Turkish commitment to the complete demining of the buffer zone.

49. I am gratified that the Committee on Missing Persons has maintained its momentum and is advancing towards the resolution of one of the most painful aspects of the Cyprus problem. The success of this bicomunal endeavour will depend on the continued and welcomed respect and restraint shown by both communities, which has allowed efforts in the context of this humanitarian issue to proceed in a depoliticized manner. I hope that the progress achieved can contribute towards a closer understanding between the two communities.

50. It is important for all involved in the Cyprus issue to work to foster an atmosphere conducive to efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive settlement. In this regard, I am grateful for the support of Security Council members and of others concerned for our collective efforts both in New York and on the island.

51. In view of the above, and in the absence of a comprehensive settlement, I believe that UNFICYP continues to play a vital role on the island. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNFICYP by a further period of six months, until 15 June 2008.

52. In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to my Special Representative and Head of Mission, Michael Møller, to the Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Rafael Barni, and to the men and women serving in UNFICYP for the efficiency and dedication with which they have discharged the responsibilities entrusted to them by the Security Council.

# UNFICYP Raises Money for AIDS!

In commemoration of World AIDS Day, UNFICYP held an auction and raffle on 14 December to raise funds for local NGO's supporting HIV/AIDS patients on the island.

The two charities chosen – KYFA and Pink House – support patients in the south and the north respectively. The auction raised C£1,500 for the support groups.

Military, police and civilian personnel were asked to contribute to the auction and raffle with prizes and services they could offer. This resulted in some interesting ideas and some novel items being offered.

Raffle tickets were also sold and with each ticket, a condom was given as part of the awareness campaign for safe sex.

Public Information Officer Anne Bursey served as auctioneer and kept the bidders focused and happy to part with their cash.

One of the more unusual items offered was a toilet roll FM radio and LCD Clock donated by Finance Assistant Anastasia Neocleous. Information Assistant Ersin Oztoycan was determined to buy it and, after some determined bidding, walked away with it chuckling, obviously thinking of the person she intended to give it to.

One of the services offered by MFR's Mick Ryan was a session of military physical training for a group. According to Mick, this is apparently all the rage in London at the moment. Bidding on this started at a mere £5 but quickly rose as several female participants started to bid on it. It was finally sold to Christine Iacovou from transport for £23. Now whom she plans to torture with this training session is anyone's guess.

PA to the Senior Adviser Hala Barber offered her baking skills for four Mondays of home-baked treats with the winner able to choose from a delicious selection of goodies. Finance Assistant Michele Kourea lost no opportunity to secure these treats, but whether she will be willing to share them with her colleagues remains to be seen.



**Auctioneer Anne Bursey gearing up for bidding on her painting, bought eventually by Dima Samad for £165 – and a bargain at that!**

The two strong-armed Slovak residential window washers Michal



**PIO's Ersin Oztoycan demonstrating the items up for bidding**

and Peter saw some fierce bidding for their services, and were eventually snapped up for £43.



Political Affairs Officer Tim Alchin secured the culinary skills of PA to the SRSJ Juana Clough and her husband, Security Officer Allen Clough, who will prepare and serve an authentic Korean dinner for two in his home.

Civil Affairs Liaison Assistant Dima Abdoul Samad bought an original painting by Public Information Officer Anne Bursey for a steal.

SRSJ Michael Møller donated the first prize for the raffle – two return tickets to Athens.

Numerous local businesses also supported the event offering vouchers for dinners, car washes and car rental; overnight stays at luxury hotels, treatment sessions from a health centre, a cruise to Egypt and an original Manchester United football shirt.

Tözün Catering sponsored the event with refreshments for all participants.

**Netha Kreouzos**

## SG's Message on World AIDS Day – 1 December 2007

The theme of this World AIDS Day is leadership. Without it, we will never get ahead of the epidemic.

AIDS is a disease unlike any other. It is a social issue, a human rights issue, an economic issue. It targets young adults just as they should be contributing to economic development, intellectual growth, and bringing up young children. It is taking a disproportionate toll on women. It has made millions of children orphans. It does to society what HIV does to the human body – reduces resilience and weakens capacity, hampers development and threatens stability.

This does not need to happen. We have the means to prevent young adults from becoming infected. We have the means to treat those who are infected. We have the means to provide care and support.

We have made tangible and remarkable progress on all these fronts. But we must do more. Although new data shows that global HIV prevalence has levelled off, the numbers are still staggering. It is our crucial mission to ensure that everyone can access HIV prevention, treatment, care and support – wherever they live, whatever they do. That includes those who live on the margins of society – migrants, sex workers, injecting drug users, and men who have sex with men. And it includes those who function in the mainstream – in Government, banks, legal offices, schools, and international organisations.

In reaching all those groups, overcoming stigma remains one of our biggest challenges. It is still the single biggest barrier to public action on AIDS. It is one of the reasons why the epidemic continues to

wreak its devastation around the world

Today, I call for renewed leadership in eradicating stigma associated with HIV. I applaud the brave individuals who live openly with HIV, who advocate tirelessly for the rights of the HIV-positive, who educate others about AIDS. I call for leadership among Governments in fully understanding the epidemic, so that resources go where they are most needed. And I call for leadership at all levels to step up the work to scale up towards universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010 – as pledged by all Governments last year. We have only two years left until that target date. We need to show leadership now.

As Secretary General, I am determined to lead the United Nations family in this endeavour – to ensure that we prioritize action on AIDS, to encourage Member States to keep the issue high on national and international agendas, and to work to make the UN a model of how the workplace should respond to AIDS.

Whatever our role in life, wherever we may live, in some way or another, we all live with HIV. We are all affected by it. We all need to take responsibility for the response. On this World AIDS Day, let us show the leadership required to live up to that responsibility.



## HIV/AIDS Peer Education Training

UNFICYP HIV/AIDS Focal Point Netha Kreouzos participated in a peer education-training workshop in Elkousah Lebanon from 3-6 December, organised by the UNIFIL HIV Unit.

The trip was sponsored by the HIV/AIDS Trust Fund and facilitated by UNIFIL within the framework of the regional cooperation agreement among the missions in the area.

The objective of the training was to equip the focal point with the necessary skills to be able to build capacity and skills for awareness training at UNFICYP. The Ghanaian Battalion hosted the workshop and were joined by their Tanzanian colleagues and the UNFICYP and UNAMA representatives.

The intensive four-day workshop covered the HIV/AIDS epidemic globally and regionally as well as risky behaviour and condom use, HIV/AIDS related stigma and needs of people living with HIV, vulnerable groups and soldiers' vulnerability and needs related to HIV/AIDS prevention, guidelines, principles, components and ethics in voluntary counselling and testing.

One of the key messages highlighted during the training was that UN policy stipulates that mandatory testing is not UN policy, and that fitness to serve is what defines whether a person can carry out their duties. It also stressed the importance of living

positively with HIV and not discriminating against colleagues who may have the virus.

The UN also actively promotes individuals going for voluntary testing, as it is more dangerous when a person does not know their status, rather than when they are aware of it.

UNFICYP's target for the New Year is to establish voluntary confidential counselling and testing (VCCT) within the mission. This requires training counsellors drawn from the ranks of civilian, military and police pillars.



**Netha Kreouzos (second right) during one of the practical exercises**

## Intercommunal Basketball in Pyla

At the request of both the Primary School Principals and the Heads of the Parent/Teacher Associations in Pyla, UNFICYP facilitated the first ever bicomunal basketball match on 6 December. This mixed sporting event, prior to the school's closure for the winter break, was intended as the kick-off for closer bicomunal cooperation in that village.

The activities began, as last year, with Santa and helper's arrival via UN helicopter. All the children were

### First ever intercommunal children's sports event

thrilled to receive bags of holiday sweets from the "man in red". Then, as the games were about to begin, mother nature had other ideas and all present were pelted with rain! However, no one's enthusiasm was dampened as all beat a

hasty retreat for cover and typical holiday delicacies which had been supplied by all the parents of Pyla.

The sun reappeared shortly and the children returned to the playing field for mixed football and basketball matches. Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were well represented, not only by the children but by prominent figures in both communities, who congratulated UNFICYP on facilitating the organisation of the day. Future plans include the establishment of a mixed basketball team in Pyla to participate in an island-wide league of mixed teams. This activity is being organised by the Peaceplayers International NGO with the support of UNFICYP.

In addition, the two sides have submitted their agendas for both short- and long-term bicomunal



cooperation. UNFICYP is facilitating the submission of a number of these projects to the EU's Task Force for the Turkish Cypriot community for consideration for funding.

*Sally Anne Corcoran, Political Officer*

## UNFICYP during the Festive Season



UNFICYP Christmas Carol Service



Chief of Mission's Reception for Staff

During December, colleagues in UNFICYP participated in a number of festive events.

On 12 December, the annual UNFICYP Christmas Carol Service took place in St. Columba's Church. As is customary, all contingents – Argentinian, British, Hungarian and Slovakian – participated in the event, and offered traditional national delicacies afterwards.

On 13 December, the Chief of Mission hosted a reception in the newly renovated HQ lobby for all staff. SRSg Møller toasted all present and thanked them for their hard work throughout the year.

Administration organised a lunch in the International Cafeteria on 19 December. Yet again, Manager Michael Charalambous took charge of the festive delicacies and produced an impressive spread. The CAO thanked all staff for their contributions during 2008, and wished all a happy New Year.



UNFICYP Administration's Christmas Lunch

## Fire Kills – You Can Prevent It

Fire protection is the prevention and reduction of hazards associated with fires. No one wants to think about having a fire at home or in the office. But thinking about it and being ready for it can, and does, save lives.

When a fire starts, it can grow and spread very fast. The best way to be safe from fire is to stop it from happening. Nearly all fires can be prevented. When people learn what causes fires and how to prevent them, they can make their homes and working places much safer. Below are some tips on fire protection:

1. Gas heaters are NOT to be used within sleeping accommodation.
2. When using a gas heater, make sure that it is checked/serviced by Engineering workshops, and that the area is well ventilated.
3. Empty or full gas cylinders must not be stored within a building – only in designated areas/stores. The only gas cylinder that can be inside a building is the one in use in your gas heater.
4. Never dry clothes near or over a heater.
5. Never move a heater when it is switched on.
6. Keep heaters at least 1.5 metres away from any combustible materials.
7. Never use electric heaters with bars or rods/elements on a carpeted floor.
8. All electric heaters are to be installed only by the Engineering Section workshop electricians.
9. Don't overload your electrical sockets. Extension leads should not be on the floor: secure them along the wall.
10. Never leave your heater/electrical equipment unattended.
11. Never use a two-pin unearthed plug in a three-pin socket – always use an adapter.
12. All electric appliances and fixtures should be checked monthly.
13. Seek advice from the Engineering Section or Sector engineers on the capacity of your electrical network (how many electrical items can be used in the area).

14. Fire/smoke alarms in all accommodation should be fitted to ceilings with a cover. Report immediately any faulty alarms (e.g. damaged/not working/low battery, etc.)
15. Fire and earthquake drills should be carried out regularly. Check your emergency alarms weekly/monthly to be sure that they are serviceable.
16. Smoking should only be allowed in designated areas. Ashtrays should be cleaned regularly using water.
17. During the festive season, extra care to be taken on fire prevention, especially when using candles, decoration lights, fireplaces, etc. Always get expert advice (Engineering Section/Fire Ext. 4453).

**Remember: If inside a building, get out and stay out. Never go back into a burning building.**

In the event that a fire is discovered:

- a. Evacuate the building/area immediately and raise the fire alarm, even just by shouting "fire, fire, fire".
- b. Call fire crew at the following numbers:  
UNFICYP 22-61-4777  
South: 112 / 199  
North: 199
- c. If it is safe, cut off the main electrical/gas supply switch, otherwise, reach for your main electric switch.
- d. If it is safe, fight the fire with fire extinguishers (for electric fires use carbon dioxide [CO<sub>2</sub>], or dry powder fire extinguishers only).
- e. Never use water or foam fire extinguishers on live electric fires (conductive/shock hazard).
- f. If there is a fuel leak, cover the area with foam/a fire blanket/sand/soil (special care should be taken when electricity is involved, please see para c. above).

**NOTE:** In case of a fire, never move equipment involved unless it is vital for safety reasons. Always wait for the investigation to be completed.

### Drinking and Driving is a Criminal Offence

Members of UNFICYP are to be seen as an example to the population on the island. Drinking and driving is a criminal offence which will not be tolerated within the mission.

Remember that those convicted of drink driving:

- Will have a criminal record;
- Will have administrative action taken against them resulting in career implications and the potential loss of employment, rank or seniority;
- Could experience a dramatic lifestyle change;
- Will have a huge increase in insurance;
- Will have difficulty hiring a car for the next 10 years;
- Will be judged by their peers.

Those planning to drink should not risk driving or be tempted to get into a car with anyone else who has been drinking. They should either:

- Book a taxi; or
- Use public transport; or
- Stay overnight; or
- Arrange for someone who is not drinking to drive.

Commanders at all levels have a responsibility and a duty of care to ensure those under their command do not drink and drive. The anti-drink driving campaign is to feature in training programmes. Organisers of events where alcohol will be available are to ensure that those attending are aware of the dangers of drink driving and are to ensure that either strict governance of the provision of alcohol to drivers will be applied or that alternate transport arrangements are to be made available.

**Personnel who drink and drive in Cyprus will be caught.**

Call confidentially on 2261 4666 to stop a crime

## New Faces

Six new Argentinian Military Observation Liaison Officers (MOLOs) arrived in UNFICYP on 1 October. Maj. Cesar Barrere (Argentinian Air Force), Capt. Julia Franco (Argentinian Army), Capt. Ariel Oviedo (Argentinian Army), Capt. Nicolas Pietrobelli (Argentinian Army), Capt. Sergio Ciminari (Argentinian Navy) and Capt. Richard Murray (Brazilian Army) will serve a one-year tour.

This is the first time that a woman holds a MOLO post in Sector 1. Back in Argentina, Capt. Franco works as a nurse in a Military Unit.

All took part in a 10-day induction course, which consisted of several presentations on different topics and ended with a final field exercise. Force Commander Maj. Gen. Rafael Barni presented diplomas to all MOLOs.



From the left: Capt. Ciminari, Capt. Oviedo, Maj. Barrere, Capt. Pietrobelli, Capt. Murray and Capt. Franco

José Luis Díaz, a native of the Dominican Republic, became UNFICYP spokesperson on 6 December.

José comes to Cyprus from Geneva, Switzerland, where he served as spokesperson for United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour and her Office. He has also worked in Cambodia and South Africa as part of United Nations peace-keeping and electoral operations. Among other public information activities in the United Nations, he worked as spokesperson of an investigative team established by the Secretary-General in 1997 to look into allegations of massive human rights

violations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He joined the media operation of the UN human rights office in 1998, working since then with former High Commissioners Mary Robinson and the late Sergio Vieira de Mello, as well as with the present United Nations human rights chief.

Before joining the United Nations as information officer in Geneva in 1990, José was a journalist in the United States.

José has two daughters, Mathilda, eight, and Vassia, four months. He enjoys jogging, and has given assurances to his partner Katia that he will try to resume playing squash soon.



## Visitors

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



10 December: Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Sergey Lavrov (above centre, with SA Wlodek Cibor [left] and FC Maj. Gen. José Barni [right])

12 December: Hungarian State Secretary of MoD, Dr. Agnes Vadai (left, seen [centre] together with her delegation)

13 December: Ambassador of Spain, Mr. Juan José Urtasun Erro (above left, with SRS G Moller)

15 December: General Officer Commanding 2nd Division, Maj. Gen. D. McDowell (above right)

## Sport

### Four-Day Challenge

The annual Cyprus Four-Day Challenge took place this year between 29 November and 2 December. It is a four-day race run over various distances on varying terrains, mostly rocky trails and steep hills in the Akamas peninsular near Paphos.

The MFR entered a team with four of their finest runners, Lt. Barney Meehan, WO2 (SSM) Mick Ryan, Sgt. Steve Lloyd and Cpl. "Rixy" Rix, equipped with enough flapjacks to last for the rest of the tour! We arrived in Paphos around lunchtime, and, as the first race was not due to start until 3.00 p.m. from the Coral Beach Hotel, we had time to sort out all our pre-event admin.

We all made our way to the start line (with some of us feeling better than others) and found approximately 230 participants from all over Europe. There were many lycra-clad athletes conducting some unnatural stretching routines, however some were very pleasing to the eye... The first race was a 6 km time trial which started from the Coral Beach Hotel and ended at the Sea Caves. The runners started at 10-second intervals and the first race was relatively easy, as long as you didn't start off too quickly. I was very surprised at the number of people walking around the 4 km mark; they probably ate pizza for lunch!

All team members finished the 6 km time trial with respectable times and, after a short bus ride back to the hotel, it was down to the steam room and jacuzzi for a body management session. After a brandy sour and the most expensive meze ever, it was time for an early night, ready for the next day's activities.

Next day, we faced the 11 km hill race. I think that everybody was worrying about this in their own way, since if we're all honest, nobody wants to run uphill for 11 km!

The race started at 9.30 a.m., and ran along a length of 11 km, starting at sea level and rising to 800 m. The first 3 km was on a relatively flat track going



Mick, Steve, Keith and Barny

along the coast with some wonderful views – it would have been nice to go back and enjoy them. Then, after a sharp turn right, the fun really started – hill followed by hill for the rest of the race. The worst hill for me was between 5km and 6km, as it was 1000m of hill with no let up, tabbing was the only option.

Day three arrived and a half marathon was awaiting us. During all the pre-race banter, we had been warned about the long, flat, 3 km finish. What we were not told about was that the first 3 km was uphill, so it was punishing on the legs after the previous day. There were 11 km of hills up to a height of 600 m, then 7 km downhill, so the finish line was a welcome sight. The fastest time for our team was 1 hr 46 mins, which was quite respectable considering the 21 km was run over undulating terrain on dirt tracks. This was very hard on the legs and feet, but it was all over and just a story by 11.30 a.m.

Sunday, the last day of the Challenge, was a 10 km run in the city of Paphos and was open to all runners. At 8.00 a.m., 500 tired legs crossed the start line, wondering if four days out of work was worth all this effort! Once over the finish line, we collected our medals, then made our way back to the hotel to feast on a fine, full, English breakfast and talk about a job well done.

### UNFICYP Take up the Hockey Challenge

The Cyprus Hockey Association is thriving with enthusiastic and capable players throughout the island – military and civilian, male and female.

This season, though, a new team has been added to the League and UNFICYP has entered into the fun with a very mixed bunch. The team consists of players from the Roulement Regiment in Sector Two, (currently 10 Ghurka Transport Regiment RLC), BRITCON, Mobile Force Reserve and UNFICYP civilian staff. Players from the Australian UN Police and the Argentinian Contingent are also in the squad.

Star players include the fast and furious Sgt "Flash" Fassam, the determined Sgt. Rob Whalley and the extremely talented Cpl. Katie White who is a Combined Services Ladies Team member. Linch-pin of the UNFICYP side though is qualified coach Maj. Pete King who, apart from playing a skilful game and holding the team together at the back, has been single-handedly responsible for forming this new addition to Cyprus hockey.

The season so far has also been a mixed bag for UNFICYP – they enjoyed a rather smug away victory over Styx in Dhekelia but were soon knocked down a

peg in matches against The Lions (a local Nicosia team), and ESOBGA (The English School Old Boys and Girls Association), the latter trouncing them severely. Revenge is sweet, however, and in the New Year, UNFICYP are determined to reverse the score. So look out ESOBGA!

New players are always welcome and anyone interested in playing for UNFICYP may contact Maj. Pete King, the BRS Property Manager on 99638892.

Diana Bridger



# UNFICYP Raises Money for AIDS

