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Peacekeepers honoured at UNFICYP's 2016 Summer Medal Parade

2 26 UN peacekeepers were honored for their service to the cause of peace in Cyprus at UNFICYP's Summer Medal Parade on Thursday 7 July. The ceremony took place at the Old Nicosia Airport in the UN Protected Area (UNPA). The newly appointed Special Representative of Secretary General (SRSG) and Head of Mission, Ms. Elizabeth Spehar praised the UN peacekeepers saying; "You play a vital role in executing UNFICYP's mandate in Cyprus. Your service comes at a time when negotiations for a comprehensive settlement are taking place in a climate of genuine hope and optimism. Your work to maintain the stability of the buffer zone is crucial to this big picture, and you can be proud of this. To each of you, I say well done and thank you for your contribution to peace and stability in Cyprus."

She also paid special tribute to UNFICYP's departing Force Commander, Major General Kristin Lund, who is due to complete her assignment in Cyprus in the coming weeks. She said "General Lund has excelled in this role, bringing experience, a deep understanding of the work involved in managing a complex peacekeeping mission and a great spirit of cooperation with

others, both within and outside the Mission. UNFICYP has been fortunate to have at its helm the first ever female Force Commander of a UN peacekeeping mission, and such an accomplished and capable one to boot; I have no doubt General Lund will continue to lead the way for greater involvement of women in global peace and security."

Also speaking at the event was the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Cyprus (SASG), Mr. Espen Barth Eide; "Today we mark the important contribution to peace and stability that our UN peacekeepers are making in Cyprus. Your service with UNFICYP is vital to the United Nations' overall efforts to help bridge the divides between the two communities and provide a window of opportunity for the talks to prosper. I thank you for your service with the UN in Cyprus. You can be proud of your achievements. You have represented your country and the UN with distinction and honour."

The UNFICYP Medal was introduced in 1964 to recognize a minimum of 90 days duty in Cyprus. UN peacekeepers from Argentina, Chile, Hungary, Ukraine, Serbia, Slovakia and the UK were awarded medals at today's ceremony.



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