

GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



January - March 2007
No. 110



Dear Reader!



It amazes me again, how quickly three months can pass by, and yet again there is so much to talk and write about. First of all, let me welcome our newly arrived Press Officers: Capt Eiichiro Shinoda (DMPIO), Capt Andrzej Czekaj (PB), Capt Roland Reinprecht (FPM), Capt Satya Patidar (LB), Lt Akihiko Tashiro (J-CON) and Capt Oddbjorn Dalum (OGG). As always, a big round of applause for all Press Officers and your great articles. Unfortunately, when so many new people arrive, also some others go back home and in this case we have to say Good-Bye to Capt Tsutomu Nemoto (DMPIO), who everyone knows as 'Tommy'. Thanks a million for all your hard work and

support. We'll miss you!

Apart from that there has been also a lot of action, like the FTX (see page 21), the Apple Transport (see page 22), lots of 'New People to UNDOF' (see pages 6, 7) and last, but definitely not least, the arrival of our new Force Commander (see pages 11-13), took place here in UNDOF.

For 'Gerry' and me it is time to say Good-Bye to our readers, since Gerry will most likely go home for good in June after a 1-year tour of duty and I will get a new job here in UNDOF as Staff Officer Training



This Edition's Editorial Team: Fritz, Gerry, Scotty and Ichiro

(SO Trng). This was our 4th Golan Journal together and I know already now, that I am going to miss this job big time. Thanks to everyone for all your support to us and the Golan Journal!

*Yours sincerely, Capt Stefan Zaiser,
SOPR*

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The Golan Journal is the magazine of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and it is intended to provide information about the Force and events within it which are of interest to its members. The UNDOF Media, Public Relations & Welfare Office publishes the Golan Journal quarterly. While articles and photographs are welcomed from all members of the Force, the view and opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily coincide with those of the United Nations or the Force Commander.

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Force Commander's Message

Dear Fellow Peacekeepers!

It is a pleasure and an enormous privilege for me, as your newly appointed Force Commander to address you, my soldiers and civilian staff with a few lines in your Golan Journal; the voice of all UNDOF Peacekeepers!

It is with a great mixture of jubilation and humility that I took over as the Force Commander of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force back in February. I know that this is an organization that has served with distinction for almost 33 years here on the Golan Heights! I am proud to be appointed as your Force Commander here in the best Mission in the World!

Let me first thank all of you for your efforts over the past few months. Firstly in preparing for the departure of LtGen Bala N. Sharma, who had been your Force Commander for three years. I know that LtGen Sharma was very proud of his Peacekeepers, and in my relatively short time here in the mission, I can clearly see why.

I also wish to thank you for working hard to make my arrival in the mission a very smooth one. The briefings on the operation of UNDOF and the tours of the Area of

Operations have all been conducted in a very professional and thorough manner, from the most senior officers, the excellent civilian staff, and the most junior of soldiers! All of this effort has made it easy for me as your new Force Commander. Finally, I thank all of you for continuing the excellent work of Peace Keeping here in the Golan for which you have earned UNDOF a reputation as the best and most successful Peace Keeping Mission in the world.

We have just experienced the troop rotations of the Japanese, Polish and Indian Contingents. It is always with a mixture of joy and sadness that we see old friends leaving the mission to go home and new friends arriving! To the troops who have left to be re-united with their families, I thank you for your contributions and I wish you every success in your future endeavours and every happiness on your return home. To the soldiers who have arrived, I say welcome! Congratulations on being chosen to serve here in UNDOF! I know that you will work as hard as your predecessors in the cause of Peace and I wish you a good tour here in the Golan.

To the National and International Civilian Staff, you provide the continuity between



the six monthly troop rotations and you are the experts in your respective fields. Your support to the troops and your efforts to create better integration and cooperation within the mission are praise worthy. I thank you for the good work that you are doing every day, year in and year out, and I thank you for providing me with sound and timely advice, for introductions to all Staff, and for helping me to settle into the mission as your Force Commander.

To EVERYONE in UNDOF, I say ...

*Thank you, Ďiakujem,
Danke, Merci, Dziękuję,
Arigato, Dhanyavada,
Shukran, Doda!*

Major General Wolfgang JILKE
Force Commander UNDOF

Chief of Staff Words

It is again my pleasure and privilege to write a few words for readers of the Golan Journal. We expected winter 06/07 to be a relaxing and silent period to regain energy for the coming year as UNDOF used to experience it in the previous years. But it was not this time due to several factors. They were of organizational, operational and environmental nature.

One of them was the completion of the tour of duty by the former FC UNDOF at the beginning of January. Based on a UNNY decision, the new Force Commander, MGen Wolfgang Jilke arrived in the middle of February. In consequence, I was tasked by UNHQ to take over Command as Officer in Charge of UNDOF for this transitional period. As mentioned during the Change of Command Ceremony, for me, as COS UNDOF, it was an additional big responsibility. However, I accepted very much this extra burden imposed on my shoulders as UN appreciation of my already, at that time, 3-months duty for UNDOF and confidence in my ability. At this point I should also mention involvement of all key UNDOF personnel in the proper, informative and well prepared induction program for the new FC which included in-briefs, line tours, internal and external meetings on all levels.

Another issue in this respect has been a big number of national and international visits to UNDOF. Of course, all visitors are very welcome to UNDOF and I as COS take care that the events are well planned by my staff to give as much as possible benefit for visiting officials. How-



ever, it was observed that there have been too many UNDOF personnel involved recently, especially with the national technical visits. Thus, my intention is to work out and introduce into force a COS Directive on absences from duty in UNDOF which will allow UNDOF HQ to control this process.

Another factor that has made us busy was unique weather conditions which were typical rather for autumn or spring than winter. This meant that UNDOF had to conduct its operational activity in the same intensive way as usual. In addition, UNDOF had to even increase a number of patrols and modify their performance in order to fulfill new operational requirements caused by changing the security environment in the AOS. When talking about operational matters I should mention the UNDOF Field Training Exercise "UNDERMINED NEST" which was conducted in February. The intent was to execute UNDOF's command and con-

trol (C2) system in the YELLOW environment and exercise cohesion in operational (OPS), combat support service (CSS) and support (SUP) operations on all levels of the UNDOF and OGG organization.

Let me also mention the POLBATT and LOGBATT rotations which include planning work, execution of rotation and induction training to give you the full picture of UNDOF's latest activity.

Let me assure you that from my perspective both international and national civilian and military staff did great work during these past 3 months. Thank you again for your continuous support.

Keep up the good work.

Colonel Andrzej Ostrowski
Chief of Staff UNDOF

Visits to UNDOF by Capt Eiichiro Shinoda, DMPIO



177 Japanese living in Syria. They joined J-CON day and spent a enjoyable time with UNDOF soldiers and staff. (9th Feb 2007)



Mag. Norbert Darabos, Austrian Minister of Defence with AUCON representatives (21th - 24th Feb 2007)



Col Eiichiro Fukazawa, Japanese Defense Attaché to Israel. He took part in COC and sent words of admiration and encouragement to J-CON soldier. (7th Mar 2007)



Students of the elementary Liaison Course, IDF. Familiarized with tradition and history of Polish Military Contingent on Golan Heights. POLBATT RRG demonstrated their operational capabilities for students. (20th Mar 2007)



Polish Minister of Defense, Aleksander Szczygło favored with his presence the Change of Command Ceremony at POLBATT together with Deputy Chief of General Staff of Polish Army, Gen Lech Konopka, the Commander of Polish Land Forces, Gen Waldemar Skrzypczak and H.E. Ms. Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska, Ambassador of Poland to Israel. (27th Mar 2007)

Mrs. Kyoko Shiotani, Chief Civilian Affairs Officer, UNFICYP. Familiarized with UNDOF and visited CF, Posn 16, 27, and HS. (2nd Jan 2007)

Students of George Mason University in the United States of America. Familiarized with UNDOF and went on a visit to CZ. (8th Jan 2007)

H.E. Mr. John Jenkins, British Ambassador to Syria. Familiarized with UNDOF AOR and visited Qunaitra, Family Shouting Place and B-Gate. (11th Jan 2007)

H.E. Mr. Oldrich Hlavacek, Slovak Ambassador to Syria. Visited CF and Posn 10 and was fact finding about SLOVCON activities. (2nd Feb 2007)

New People in UNDOF



The new CLPIO

LtCol Christian Palmetzhofer joined the Austrian Armed Forces in July 1981 as an Air Defense Soldier and graduated from the Military Academy in September 1989 as an Air Defense Officer. He was assigned to the 1st Air Defense

Regiment until 2002 where he had appointments as a Platoon Leader, Battery Commander and as the Regiments Intelligence and Security Officer.

From 2002 to 2006 he was the Deputy G2 and later on the G2 of the Austrian Air Force Command and his last assignment before deployment to UNDOF was as a Senior Staff Officer for Military Security matters in the J2 Division of the Joint Command Staff in the Austrian MOD.

LtCol Palmetzhofer is a graduate of the U.S. Army Advanced Air Defense Officers' Course and of the Austrian National Defense Academy and holds a Master's Degree in Defense and Security Management.

His twelve month posting as the CLPIO is his second tour with UNDOF. From November 2001 to June 2002 he served as the OpsInfo in AUSBATT.

LtCol Palmetzhofer is 46 years old, married, has one stepdaughter and he lives in Vienna.



The new CO/LB

Born on 28th Feb 1969, LtCol Manish Rai belongs to 'The Poona Horse' an elite Armoured Regiment of the Indian Army. He is an alumnus of the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, India. His 16 years of experience in the Indian Defence Forces includes

Operational Planning, Personnel Management, Logistics and Administration, which also encompass Public Relations and Training.

His experience ranges in a varied kaleidoscopic environment from deserts to high altitude at Counter Insurgency Operations (Jammu & Kashmir).

He is an above average sportsman and plays all troop games and is also an excellent Cricket and Hockey player. He has held various prestigious staff appointments in his career. He has served in the rank of Captain in an operational environment in J & K as the General Staff Officer in Charge of Operations from 1999 to 2001.

Again as a LtCol he has served in Jammu & Kashmir as the Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General where he was responsible for Planning and Execution of the Logistic Support for the entire force of a Divisional level.



The new COGG-T

Born on 29th Jun 1965, LtCol Deepak Ghale Gurung has been in the Nepalese Army for 21 years having initially joined the Nepalese Army as a commissioned officer cadet in 1983. He is a professional infantry officer with wide experience in Operations, Logistics Management and Administration at Infantry Brigade, Logistic Brigade and Division level having already commanded an Independent Company, Anti-aircraft Battery and a Battalion. He graduated from the Nepalese Defense Institute with degrees in Anthropology and Sociology.

He has successfully completed numerous army courses covering Special Counter Insurgency Jungle Warfare, Intelligence and Signal Officers' course and an advanced air defense course as well as a Command & Staff College course.

He has also attended International courses as Group Testing Officer at the Defense Institute of Psychological Research Centre, and the Advanced Ordnance Course at the College of Material Management in India. He served as Battalion Commander during insurgency operations in Nepal and was awarded the Nepalese Appreciation and Special Appreciation Medal for these operations.

His experience with the UN mission comprises of duty tours as a Military Observer with United Nation Protection Force in Former Yugoslavia in 1992 and the United Nation Observer Mission in Tadjikistan in 1996. He is happily married to Mrs. Bhawana Ghale and they have two children, a son Paramveer and daughter Deevashree.



The new FMO

LtCol Shailja OS Karki arrived in the mission area on 17th Mar 2007 and assumed the responsibilities of the Force Medical Officer on 20th Mar 2007. Born in the picturesque state of Jammu and Kashmir she has traveled widely all through India, firstly, as an

Army Officer's daughter and secondly as an Army Officer herself. She is an alumna of the Armed Forces Medical College (Pune University) where she was awarded the prestigious medal for standing first in surgery. Further, she acquired an MD in Aerospace Medicine. As a Flight Surgeon she has served with the Army Aviation Squadrons located at high altitudes, sub-tropical forests and the coastal areas. Now a classified specialist, her areas of interest are Aviation Ergonomics and Human Factors Analysis and Classification in Aviation Accidents. Back home, she misses Ragini, her twelve year old daughter and Bingo, a three year old English Cocker Spaniel.



The new CO/J-CON

Maj Ryuji Toyota was born in Kagoshima prefecture (Southern Part of Japan) on 19th Apr 1971. His military carrier began in 1994 after graduating from the National Defense Academy (majored in International Relations). Following his graduation

from Ground Self Defense Force Officers' Candidate School, he was assigned to 19th Infantry Regiment as a Platoon Leader. Maj Toyota was promoted to Lt II and completed the Infantry Basic Officer's Course in 1995, and 1997 he was promoted to Lt I.

In 2001 he earned his Master's Degree of International Affairs from Columbia University, USA. In 2005 he was promoted to his current rank. After completing the Command and General Staff Course in 2005, Maj Toyota was assigned as a Coy Commander, 46th Infantry Regiment. In 2006 he completed a Staff Officer Course in the Swedish Army, and was assigned as the CO of 23rd J-CON in the Golan Heights.

Maj Toyota has a wife, a daughter and a son, and his family lives in Hiroshima prefecture. His hobbies are watching movies and playing soccer.



The new CO/PB

LtCol Jarosław Gromadziński (PL Army) was born in Góra Śląska in 1971. He began his military career in 1990 as a Cadet of the Land Forces Officers' College in Wrocław. His first place of duty, just after graduation from the college, was as Infantry

Platoon Commander in 14th Mechanized Infantry Brigade from Elbląg. Between 1995-1997 he was an Infantry Company Commander and after finishing the High Course for Senior Infantry Officers' in 1997 he returned to the 14th Mechanized Infantry Brigade for the position of the Mechanized Battalion's Chief of Staff.

Two years later he was promoted to the Commander of that battalion. In the year 2000 he was sent to study at the National Defense Academy in Warsaw, from where he graduated in 2002 with a distinction. Soon after he was promoted to the rank of Major and joined the Strategic Planning Division (J5) in the Polish Armed Forces General Staff. He completed the Military English Course in York St. John College of the University of Leeds as well. He took part in the NATO mission in Iraq.

To the rank of LtCol he was promoted in 2005 while simultaneously taking over duties as Battalion Commander within the 9th Armoured Cavalry Brigade from Braniewo. He is happily married and has one son.

He likes sports and military history especially from World War II.



The new FPM

Capt Roland Reinprecht joined the Austrian Armed Forces as a conscript in 1991. In 2003, he completed the Military Academy and became Platoon Leader of the Guards of Honour in Vienna in 2005. Currently in Austria he serves as a Coy Commander at the Guards of Honour in Vienna.

In 2005 he passed the UN Military Police Course and in September 2006 he joined UNDOF as Deputy Force Provost Marshal.

By the end of February 2007, Capt Reinprecht has been promoted to Force Provost Marshal.

Capt Reinprecht is married to Manuela and has a two year old daughter named Isabel.

The new Austrian Minister of Defense

From 21st to 24th Feb 2007 the new Austrian Minister of Defense (MOD), Mag. Norbert Darabos, conducted his first visit to AUSBATT.



The Minister of Defense was accompanied by LtGen Edmund Entacher, his staff members and a film team. After the arrival, Mag. Darabos met with MGen Wolfgang Jilke, Force Commander UNDOF and LtCol Gerd Schrimpf, Chief OGG-D at the Representative Office in Damascus (ROD). On this occasion the minister received detailed first hand information about the current situation in the Area of Responsibility.

On 22nd Feb 2007 the Minister had a military reception with Guard of Honor at Posn 27. After playing the national anthem the delegation was briefed about the history and mandate by Maj Friedrich Steininger, and about UNDOF's and AUSBATT's mission by LtCol Rudolf Zauner and LtCol Robert Glanner. Of course, the famous *'Hospital Briefing'*, performed by OiC 2nd Coy/AB, Maj Manfred Kaufmann, was also a fixed topic during the Minister's stay at Posn 27. A delicious lunch at the Position was followed by a short tour through

Qunaitra and into the Grazing Area. Both impressions were highly interesting for the entire delegation.

Handover of checks to the Blind School in Khan Arnabeh.

After the introduction of 2nd Coy AUSBATT the Austrian delegation met with the Governor of Qunaitra and the Austrian Ambassador to Syria. The Minister of Defense handed over a check of \$1,000,- together with the Austrian Ambassador's \$5,000,- to Dr. Hosam Doughouz, who is the head of the Red Crescent Center and AUSBATT's 'Point of Contact' to the Blind School in Khan Arnabeh. The entire delegation received a very warm welcome at this school and could take a look at the prospering work of the handicapped people there. AUSBATT has been sponsoring this project since 2005 from the very beginning with great success.



'Hospital Briefing' near Posn 27 in Qunaitra



Handover of checks for the Blind School in Khan Arnabeh



The Minister with a ski patrol at his line tour on Mt. Hermon

In the afternoon Mag. Darabos participated in the Change of Command of UNDOF from Col Andrzej Ostrowski to MGen Jilke. In his speech the Austrian MOD underlined the importance of the Austrian participation in peacekeeping in the Middle East and AUSBATT's good performance and reputation since the very beginning of this mission. After the official part the Austrian guests were escorted to the buffet in the Austrian International Kitchen where the Austrian Minister of Defense used the pleasant opportunity for small talk with International guests and his Austrian soldiers.



The Austrian Minister of Defence congratulates the new FC of UNDOF

The next highlight of the Minister's visit was the line tour on Mt. Hermon, where alpine efficiency was demonstrated by the soldiers of 1st Coy AUSBATT. The first demonstration was a ski patrol downhill along the notorious 'Bully Rinne'. The second highlight was a demonstration of capabilities with the over snow vehicles and ski-doo's when driving in difficult terrain. Mag. Darabos was deeply impressed by the performance of the soldiers and their equipment under extreme environmental influences.



Men of Posn 12 present a tart to the Minister of Defence

On 24th Feb 2007 the topic was the meeting with the Syrian Minister of Defense in Damascus, who introduced important statements concerning the cooperation between the two countries and Syria's point of view of the current security situation in the Middle East. After enjoying Arabic dishes in a typical Arabic restaurant inside Souq al Hammidiya the new Austrian MOD returned home with great impressions of his first troop inspection abroad.



The Austrian Minister meets the Syrian Minister of Defence in Damascus

*Article by Capt Thomas Güttersberger,
OpsInfo/AB
Photos by Sgt Thomas Aigner,
OpsInfoAss/AB*



KRČMA U ORLA

EAGLE'S PUB is a bit of Slovakia in the heart of Syria

Austria's Schweija Hut, Poland's Polska Gospoda, Japan's Fuji House, Indian's Taj... and now, since February 2007 there is also Slovak's Krčma u orla!



At the beginning of the project



Maj Farkaš, LtCol Glanner, Capt Targoš - Opening ceremony

The idea to create a suitable place for informal meetings with guests of 3rd Coy SLOVCON came from OiC of 3rd Coy Capt Zdenko Targoš, who became also the father of the whole project.

First there was only an empty room at Posn 10 which was used as an occasional store. The works started in the beginning of December 2006 and after many evenings, the idea became real and newborn Krčma u orla for the first time saw the sun.

The 10th Feb 2007 was the chosen day from which on Krčma u orla should write its history. At 18:00 LT our 'Guest of Honor' LtCol Robert Glanner, CO/AB cut the tape and Krčma u orla was officially opened.

Nowadays, except for the main purpose for which Krčma was built, it is also used for informal briefings, different celebrations and birthday parties. The time shows that the idea was right. Krčma, which has brought a bit of Slovakia into the heart of Syria has become in eve-



Capt Targoš - Father of the whole project

nings the most visited place at the position.

At the end I would like to thank all people who helped with realizing this project and special thanks to OiC of 3rd Coy Capt Zdenko Targoš for such a good idea, members of SLOVCON MSgt Michal Truchlík, LCpl Branislav Moroz, MSgt Michal Števík, LCpl Jozef

Tomko and members of the Engineers Platoon of AUSBATT under the command of CEO/AB Capt Hans-Peter Steiner.

Thank You!

*Article by LtI Marek Číri SuppO/AB
Photos by Capt Zdenko Targoš
OiC 3rd Coy/AB*

New UNDOF Force Commander



Major General Wolfgang Gilke was born in Innsbruck/Austria on 15th Feb 1949. He joined the Austrian Army in 1967 as a Private soldier. From 1968 to 1971 he attended the Military Academy after which he served as an Armoured Platoon Commander and then an Armoured Company Commander.

From 1979 to 1982, MGen Gilke attended the General Staff Officers Course.

MGen Gilke has held numerous Command and Staff appointments including: G3 and later Chief of Staff of an Infantry Division, Instructor at the War College, Commander of an Armoured Battalion, Commander of a Mechanised Brigade, Commander of the Austrian International Peace Support Command, Chief of the Office of the Federal Minister of Defence and most recently the Austrian Military Representative to the Military Committee of the European Union in Brussels. MGen Gilke has held other important international appointments including in 1999 he was the Deputy Partner Military Representative at the Mission of Austria to NATO in Brussels.

MGen Gilke is no stranger to Peacekeeping and the Golan Heights. In 1975 he was a Company Commander with UNEF in Egypt and then came to UNDOF in Syria as one of the first contingents to deploy to this Mission. He returned again to UNDOF in 1989 as Deputy Chief of Staff.

MGen Gilke is a member of the Royal College of Defence Studies in London since 1997.

MGen Gilke assumed command as Force Commander of UNDOF on 22nd Feb 2007.

MGen Gilke has two children.



List of Force Commanders in UNDOF

BGen Gonzalo Briceno	PERU	June 1974 – December 1974
MGen Hannes Philipp	AUSTRIA	December 1974 – May 1979
MGen Günther Greindl	AUSTRIA	May 1979 – Feb 1981
MGen Erik Kaira	FINLAND	March 1981 – April 1982
MGen Gustav Stahl	SWEDEN	June 1982 – May 1985
MGen Gustav Hagglund	FINLAND	June 1985 – May 1986
MGen Gustav Welin	SWEDEN	July 1986 – September 1988
MGen Adolf Radauer	AUSTRIA	September 1988 – September 1991
MGen Roman Misztal	POLAND	September 1991 – November 1994
MGen Johannes C. Kosters	NETHERLANDS	January 1995 – May 1997
MGen Dave F. Stapleton	IRELAND	May 1997 – August 1998
MGen H. Cameron Ross	CANADA	October 1998 – July 2000
MGen Bo Wranger	SWEDEN	August 2000 – August 2003
MGen Franciszek Gagor	POLAND	August 2003 – January 2004
LtGen Bala N. Sharma	NEPAL	January 2004 – January 2007
MGen Wolfgang Jilke	AUSTRIA	February 2007– up to date

FC Change of Command at UNDOF

On 22nd Feb 2007 Camp Faouar hosted the Change of Command Ceremony of our new Force Commander UNDOF, Austrian born, MGen Wolfgang Jilke. MGen Jilke is assuming command, as Force Commander, after LtGen Bala N. Sharma, who said Good-Bye to UNDOF on 12th Jan 2007.



Signing Ceremony at the Parade Square in Camp Faouar

Numerous guests and VIPs, such as the Austrian Minister of Defence (MOD) Mag. Norbert Darabos, Ambassadors and Attachés from all Embassies, SSAD BGen Abdul A. Darwish, FC UNIFIL MGen Claudio Graziano, Head of Mission (HOM) UNTSO MGen Ian C. Gordon, Officer in Charge (OIC)/COS UNDOF Col Andrzej Ostrowski, and CAO UNDOF Patrick J. Devaney, alongside with Civilian and Military Staff of UNDOF and all contingents and troops, being present at this ceremony, showed the significance of our new Force Commander. As always, the ceremony itself was well prepared and commanded by LtCol Rudolf Zauner, COO UNDOF.

Outgoing OIC Col Ostrowski addressed the illustrious guests in his valedictory by stating what a big challenge and unique opportunity was his time as OIC. Col Ostrowski mentioned the main events during this transitional period as being the 3-day FTX (see page 11), the AUS-BATT Manpower & Organization Review, the centralization of the warehouses and the transition from some old to new maps. The OIC continued with thanking the Military and Civilian Staff of UNDOF and OGG, the SSAD BGen Darwish, HOM UNTSO MGen Gordon and his Political Adviser Mr. Francesco Manca, and the Excellencies and members of the Diplomatic Corps. Finally, the OIC

assured the new Force Commander his very best to support him.

Right after the Signing Ceremony and the Hand-Over/Take-Over of the UN Flag, the new Force Commander MGen Jilke addressed the audience in his inaugural with a mixture of pleasure, jubilation and humility that he is right now experiencing and with mention that UNDOF is one the best missions in the World. MGen Jilke emphasized the excellent cooperation and relationship with the Ambassadors, the Defence Attaché Group, the UN Community, the SSAD, the Governors of UNDOF's AOR, UNTSO and UNIFIL. The new FC also thanked Col Ostrowski for his excellent work and CAO



Inspecting the troops - Taking the salute

Mr. Devaney for his sound and timely advice. At the end of his speech, MGen Gilke addressed all 6 contingents in their respective mother tongue as being the backbone of the mission, with their 24/7 work hours in the bitter cold on Mount Hermon and the scorching heat of the Wadi, always prepared to even make the ultimate sacrifice in the cause of peace. It will be his privilege and honor to command such motivated soldiers.

Mag. Darabos finally addressed the distinguished guests with the responsibility of the 'Blue Helmets' for carrying out such an eminent task in the Middle East.

For more than 30 years now UN soldiers successfully prevented an armed conflict, which is an outstanding accomplishment. Unfortunately, however, the Middle East

conflict has not been resolved once and for all, thus Austria will continue its contributions as it has contributed right from the beginning over 32 years ago. The Minister continued and emphasized the outstanding example MGen Gilke sets, through his experience and history with UNDOF, having been twice here before and what an honor for Austria it is to be chosen to place a Force Commander into service. Mag. Darabos finished his speech by thanking MGen Gilke for his willingness to fill this challenging position and wished him good luck as a soldier and diplomat.



Mag. Darabos and MGen Gilke

The ceremony ended as always with the marching out of the troops and the final salute taken by MGen Gilke and Col Ostrowski, and a reception in the Austrian International Kitchen (AIK).

*Article by Capt Stefan Zaiser, SOPR
Photos by WOII Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer*

INDCON TOCA Ceremony

The Indian contingent in Camp Ziouani organised a Parade on 30th Mar 2007 to commemorate the Take Over of Command Authority (TOCA) between the incoming Commanding Officer, LtCol Manish Rai and the outgoing Commanding Officer LtCol J.S. Bakshi, both from 'The Poona Horse Regiment' (Armoured Corps) of the Indian Army.



Distinguished guests at the TOCA Ceremony

The Force Commander UNDOF, MGen Wolfgang Jilke, presided over the ceremony which was attended by senior civilian and military staff of UNDOF, UNTSO, UN international employees, representatives from the Israeli Defence Force and local civilian employees of Camp Ziouani.

The parade lasted for a duration of thirty minutes. The contingent was marched in before the arrival of the Force Commander and thereafter the parade was handed over to the outgoing Commanding Offi-

cer, LtCol Bakshi. On the arrival of the Force Commander, the Regimental Standard was marched in and the parade presented arms to the Regimental Standard and then to the Force Commander, MGen Jilke. The Commander revisited the immaculately turned out contingent soon after which the National Anthem was rendered. The documents for handing/taking over were brought in and were signed by the new Commanding Officer, LtCol Rai and the outgoing Commanding Officer, LtCol Bakshi witnessed

by the Force Commander. According to traditions the Regimental Standard was handed over to the new Commanding Officer. This ceremony symbolized the importance attached to the responsibility that the new Commanding Officer would have to bear to execute his command tasks in challenging circumstances. The same was reiterated by the Force Commander in his address to the parade after the customary address to the parade by the outgoing and the new Commanding Officer of INDCON.



Signing Ceremony - LtCol Rai, MGen Jilke, LtCol Bakshi

The Force Commander expressed his praise and thanks to the outgoing rotation personnel for the good work performed by them in providing efficient logistics support to the UNDOF mission and wished the incoming rotation personnel the very best in the performance of their duties during their tenure in UNDOF.

The parade was followed by a grand reception in Camp Ziouani A Line Mess. The Force Commander raised a toast for the outgoing contingent with a customary joke and offering his best wishes to the new contingent. The arrangements were appreciated by all those who were present.



Inaugural of the new CO/LB - LtCol Rai

*Article and Photos by
Maj Satya Patidar, SigO/LB*

POLBATT - Change of Command

Change of Command Ceremony at POLBATT favored by the presence of the Polish Minister of Defence, Aleksander Szczygło.



Signing HTO documents - LtCol Gromadzinski, MGen Jilke, LtCol Gral

The Polish Minister of Defence, Aleksander Szczygło, arrived at Camp Ziouani on 27th Mar 2007, favoring with his presence the solemnity of the Change of Command at the Polish Military Contingent (PMC) of UNDOF on the Golan Heights. The Minister was accompanied by the 1st Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Polish Army, Gen Lech Konopka and by the Commander of the Polish Land Forces, Gen Waldemar Skrzypczak. The solemnity began with reporting POLBATT's readiness to the Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke and hoisting the Polish national flag. Then the Minister of Defence thanked XXVI Rotation of PMC for their involvement and hard work during completion of their UN mis-

sion tasks and wished them a safe return trip to their homeland. He congratulated the incoming XXVII rotation CO LtCol Jarosław Gromadzinski on being chosen as such and wished all soldiers a safe mission and quick return to their families.

After that, the addresses of the Force Commander and outgoing CO LtCol Tomasz Gral took place. The main part of the solemnity started with the ceremony of handing over POLBATT's

standard to the new CO, and then the protocols of Handover/Takeover were signed.

The new CO, in his address, thanked his predecessor for good



The FC handing over the standard to the new CO

advice and useful information given during changing command program and assured, that he will do his best for the tasks of UNDOF to be completely fulfilled with the dignity of a Polish Soldier.

At the end of solemnity the Chaplain blessed the soldiers and the military parade was performed. Traditionally, honorable guests together with



Planting an olive tree

COs and FC planted an olive tree as a symbol of peace at a yard next to POLBATT's Hall of Tradition. When the official part was finished everyone was able to taste traditional Polish dishes, cakes and beverages at the reception.

*Article and Photos by
Capt Andrzej Czekał
PressO/PB*

MEDAL PARADE IN THE POLISH CONTINGENT

The handing over of UNDOF medals for Commitment to Peace was the most important celebration during the whole mission for every one of the Polish Peacekeepers.



The FC handing over medals

On the 16th Feb, after almost 6 months of duty on the Golan Heights, soldiers of the XXVI POLBATT Rotation reached the last moment when medals hung on their chests. On behalf of the UN Secretary General the decoration was performed by the new Force Commander, MGen Wolfgang Jilke. The

ceremony was favored with the presence of the Ambassador of Poland in Israel H.E. Agnieszka Magdziak - Miszewska, Military Attaché of Defense Col Ireneusz Drążyk, representatives of the Polish Military Contingent UNIFIL in Lebanon, representatives of UNDOF Headquarters and also Israeli Armed



Happy faces of decorated soldiers

Forces members as well as Polish Franciscans from Jerusalem.

The program of the ceremony included addresses of the Force Commander, the Polish Ambassador to Israel and the CO/PB.

After the official part, in spite of rather inclement weather conditions, the spirit of all guests was very good and everyone could taste dishes of traditional Polish Cuisine.

*Article by Capt Andrzej Czekał
Incoming PressO/PB
Photos by Capt Sławomir Tadzik
Outgoing PressO/PB*

J-CON Change of Command

The J-CON Change of Command was held in Camp Ziouani on 7th Mar 2007



Signing ceremony - Maj Toyota, MGen Jilke, Maj Takahashi

The outgoing CO Maj Yoji Takahashi handed over the command of J-CON to his successor Maj Ryuji Toyota. FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke, Col Ei-ichiro Fukazawa, the Japanese Military Attache to Israel, COS Col Andrzej Ostrowski, UNDOF Branch Heads and all other COs were present to honor this ceremony. Maj Takahashi and Maj Toyota both signed the Handover/ Takeover protocol.

Maj Takahashi expressed his gratitude for the partnership, the very close cooperation and for the excellent hospitality of UNDOF. He also encouraged the new members of J-CON. The incoming CO declared that his contingent will overcome any problems with Japanese spirit and expressed



23rd J-CON UNIT PLATE has been changed at 1800 on 7th Mar 2007

his policy of 'Harmony'. Following the official part of the ceremony, all honorable guests were invited to the reception with very nice authentic food at 'A-LINE'. Japanese sushi,

which is a popular and cultural food, was the most favorite among participants.

Article by LtI Akihiko Tashiro
Photos by WOIII Shinji Kusada

Change of Command MP Platoon & their daily business

On 16th Feb 2007, after a long period, a small but nevertheless fine crowd viewed the Force Provost Marshal CoC Ceremony at the newly renovated MP C-Detachment.

Under the supervision the FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke and witnessed by the COS Col Andrzej Ostrowski, the CAO Mr. Patrick Devaney, the CO/AB LtCol Robert Glanner, Branch Heads and Staff members of HQ UNDOF, Capt Reinprecht took over Command of the UNDOF Military Police Platoon consisting of 29 personnel.



MP HQ personnel briefs FC, MGen Jilke about sensible tasks of MP C-Detachment



From the left: Capt Reinprecht, FPM and WOI Sakoparnik, MWO IC MP-Plt welcome the newly arrived Indian MPs



Endstation in the mine field



Daily business of the UNMP despite the weather conditions

Events in UNTSO – Observer Group Golan / Tiberias

On the 23rd Mar 2007 a Change of Command Ceremony and a Medal Parade were held in the OGG-T MAC-House in Tiberias. The occasion was also used by the Chief of Staff UNTSO, MGen Ian C. Gordon, to present “Letters of Commendation” to UNTSO officers due to depart the mission area whose performance during their tour of duty was above the call of duty. The ceremony was also attended by MGen Wolfgang Gilke, Force Commander UNDOF, other high ranking dignities, station staff and non-UN guests.

Change of Command

After a one year tour of duty as Chief OGG-T the outgoing Chief LtCol Jan W. Mezger, from the Netherlands handed over the responsibility for the UNTSO Tiberias Outstation to LtCol Deepak Ghale from Nepal.

The Change of Command was formalized by the signing of Certificates by the COS UNTSO MGen Gordon, and the outgoing and incoming Station Chiefs.



Signing ceremony

Medal Parade

The ceremony started with the presentation and award of the UNTSO-Medal to Observer Officers who had already completed a 90 day tour of duty within UNTSO.

A total of 41 UNMOs from Observer Group Lebanon (OGL), Damascus and Tiberias, as well as some Staff Officers from UNTSO HQ in Jerusalem, received the medal.



Medal Recipients

Letters of Commendation

The two UNTSO Officers named below were awarded “Letters of Commendation” for their excellent performance during the Israel/Lebanon War in July-August 2006.

LtCol Mezger; who acted swiftly and decisively to ensure the safety and security of his headquarters staff and off-duty personnel in re-locating OGG-T headquarters to Camp Ziouani in the Golan. This was accomplished during a time of intensive shelling in the vicinity of the OGG-T headquarters building in Tiberias. His performance during this difficult period was faultless and inspirational.

Capt McDonald; who was posted at OGL Patrol Base Mar in Lebanon where, on 12th Jul 2006, he and his team were exposed to close by multiple firings. When four fellow Military Observers were tragically killed in Patrol Base Khiam, Captain McDonald was called upon to assist with the recovery of their bodies. He ensured the recovery and the identification process was accomplished with dignity and respect and in a manner befitting his fallen colleagues.



Commendation to LtCol Mezger



Commendation to Capt McDonald

*Article by Maj Robert Mandl, MPO OGG-T
Photos by Maj Lars Madsen, UNMO OGG-T*

EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE

FTX - under this acronym UNDOF conducted the Field Troop Exercise "UNDERMINED NEST" from 6th to 8th Feb 2007, which involved for the first time all parts of UNDOF, including OGG.



Road-Block due to Mass-Casualties-Event near OP 56

The aim of this exercise was to have a realistic training modus with the entire participation of UNDOF battalions in order to confirm needs of amendments in the Operations Plan and keep a record of necessary changes for the following revision of the entire training. In this exercise a Directory Staff was formed with a strong Evaluation and a Role Player Team to receive detailed results focusing on cooperation within different Battalions and OGG as well as reporting and coordination between battalions and UNDOF HQ.

The COS's intent was to exercise the transition from alert status PRELIMINARY to YELLOW and conduct mandatory response operations within current operational concept expressed in the Operations Plan. The intent was to execute UNDOF's command and control (C2) system in the YELLOW status environment; exercise cohesion in operational, combat support service and support opera-

tions on all levels of the UNDOF and OGG organization and the validation of Operations Plan for further amendments.

Just to point out some of the highlights of the exercise:

In order to have a realistic scenario, the exercise started with excellent weather conditions like heavy wind and rain, fog and snow on Mount Hermon on the 6th February which fit perfectly to our first incident. Due to a collapsed radio antenna on an UNTSO OP with a medical casualty, UNDOF had to organize a medical evacuation to the A-side.

Due to the severe weather conditions on Mt. HERMON the incident for medical evacuation had to be cancelled which showed the dif-

ficulties that the soldiers who live in the HERMON Area face during winter time. Several other incidents had been conducted throughout the day.

Due to the very good results of the first day the weather improved and the exercise continued the next day under clouds and the last day under sunny weather conditions. Higher tensions on both sides led to scenarios where troops had to cope with incidents such as demonstrations of the local population, mass casualties, increased camp security, temporary evacuation of Positions and the relocation of the UNDOF Logistic unit. UNDOF HQ was facing an avalanche of questions by media representatives including the Troup Contributing Countries up to the level of DPKO New York.

In general the overall exercise was a success; however there is always room for improvement and UNDOF is looking forward to conducting the next FTX.

*Article by Maj Kurt Findeis, SSO Training and Maj Karl Curin, SO Training
Photos by WOII Gernot Payer, Force Photographer*



Simulated car accident in POLBATT AOR

Apple Transport: 'Business as Usual'

On 26th Feb 2007 operation 'Apple Transport' started, where roughly 10,000 tons of apples are being shipped from A-Side to B-Side. With the help of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) approximately 100 tons of apples are shipped daily and will continue for about 90 days.

It is now the 3rd time that the Druze Sheiks and Farmers, have been able to ship their apple harvest in spring time from A-Side to B-Side and this event has become more and more common to UNDOF and the ICRC.

Here is a little background information on this extraordinary economic event between Syria and Israel. Two years ago it started for the first time, when the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture and Countryside Development approved a request from Druze Sheiks and Farmers from the Golan to export their apples to Syria. The then Force Commander, LtGen Bala N. Sharma, conducted official talks with the Syrian authorities, concerning the sensitive dimension of this issue. After all, there is no international border between both countries, but only checkpoints for the crossing of UNDOF personnel.

So many inquiries were raised by the FC to find an appropriate method of executing the deal practically. Eventually all authorities came



Druze farmers, ICRC representative, COS UNDOF on A-Side



Loaded ICRC-Truck, ready to go



Druze farmers and UNDOF personnel enjoying apples on B-Side

up with a solution that was suitable for all stakeholders.

The Druze Farmers bring their apples to A-Gate and reload them onto ICRC trucks. ICRC transports them to the B-Gate, through C-Gate, under the supervision of UNDOF, and reloads them onto Syrian trucks and then the apples are shipped all over Syria. Most UNDOF personnel are involved in this event, at least indirectly, since the transport for them causes other delays in crossing.

But now this event has become 'Business as Usual' for both UNDOF and the ICRC and with the successful completion of each event perhaps the most important thing is that it may even help to strengthen the peace building process in the Middle East which is worth any sacrifice..

*Article by
Capt Stefan Zaiser, SOPR*

*Photos by
WOII Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer*

The New Medical Center at Camp Faouar - Part 3 of 4

What happened from January till March? This article, will give you the answer as well as the forecast for the final article in June 2007.



UNDOF Engineering Team at the construction site

Since the solid structure was completed in January the outer walls have been sided with sheet metal and the international 'Red Cross' marking is already visible from a distance. But the center of engineering gravity has been put on the internal accomplishments. The electrical supply has been provided



First inside view of the new Medical Center

and the lighting panels have been mounted. And this step normally makes a building come alive. Satellite-TV & Telephone connections have been wired and installation of an air conditioning system will take place soon.

Also, a 'Patient Information System' which connects patient-rooms with the duty-station was installed.

ply. This phase will be concluded by the constructive provision of a garbage collection point and an external store for oxygen- & gas-bottles. The entire technical development will be finalized by paving mainly the access and supply areas. The new medical centre will have its main-entrance oriented east, nearby the quarters, so patients will enter the medical facility with the early daylight. Patients will get their own external recreational area oriented west, so they can have their cigarettes with the view of sunset, whereas all supporting measures are oriented north of the building, such as technical services & facilities and a supply road. The new facility will have its own supply entrance, so that no supply items will have to be carried through the main entrance, which is similar to the set up of hotels. Now at the end what's going to happen with the most valuable orientation, the south and west. If it comes true the areas are going to be landscaped by experts, where finally grass, flowers and plants will grow in the future to provide the proper

environment for patients' recovery. So we can say a 'Green Belt' is laid out around the new medical centre. UNDOF Chief General Services is currently working hard on it.

Concurrently the external area has progressed well and different utilities will also soon be operational such as the boiler hut & heat, power and water supply.

By reading this article the final question arises naturally. Where is the medical equipment coming from? The Austrian Ministry of Defence was always part of the planning process and agreed to supply and provide brand new equipment and assets to this project. At present it's just a matter of time if the transportation and delivery to UNDOF can be carried out in accordance with the construction schedule because time is running.



Outside appearance with 'Red Crosses'

And the opening of the new medical centre is scheduled at the end of May 2007. Huge efforts in terms of coordination and cooperation are in front of all of us to achieve finally this core goal for UNDOF.

The UNDOF Engineering Section has to accomplish its task first and the Austrian Battalion has then to relocate the current facility to the new destination.

To be continued...

*Article by Maj Roman Zaller, FCEO
Photos by Maj Roman Zaller, FCEO
and Sgt Philipp Oswald, TAA*

