The Blue Beret
March 2004

President of Hungary Visits UNFICYP
READ THE PLAN

On 31 March in Bürgenstock, Switzerland, the Secretary-General presented the leaders with the final version of his plan, “The Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem”. In doing so, he said that the decision is now up to the people when in addition to simultaneous, separate referendum on 24 April.

There is much to deliberate on in the run-up to the referenda at this crucial point in the island’s history. Yet, one thing is clear. The plan provides for one opportunity for holding the referenda and one only. Just as the Secretary-General said there is no plan B, so too, there is no referendum C. If not approved on 24 April, the plan will be null and void.

Special Adviser de Soto pointed this out on his return to the island after briefing the Security Council in New York, noting: “We’ve had four years of negotiations. The plan is on the table. The time has come for a definitive decision”.

He appealed for a calm assessment of the plan on each side. Above all, he appealed to the people to read the plan.

Media reports to the contrary, the plan has been approved at Bürgenstock – for both sides. True, the plan contains some points where the Secretary-General filled in the gaps by invitation of the leaders. Obviously, the plan is a compromise – but de Soto’s words, it is a principled compromise that meets the most important basic concerns of the two sides.

“We believe the final product is a fair plan, a workable plan, a plan that accommodates the concerns of each side. But the only way the Cypriots can decide this is if they read the plan carefully. The plan is now available on many websites, including the UN site, www.unannanplan.org.”

Contents

31 March 2004

The time for negotiation and consultation is over. The time for decision and action has arrived. I hope, in addition to the leadership of each side – Mr Papa- christou, Mr. Öztürk, Mr. Demetris Christofias, Prime Minister Karamanlis and Prime Minister Erdogan are with us tonight – thank you Mr. Verheugen, the European Union Enlargement Commissioner, for being with us, and demonstrating the Union’s strong support for this effort to bring about a Cyprus settlement.

Two days ago, when some of us last met here, I submitted to you a revision of Mr Verheugen’s plan. Since then, we have had at least four busy hours. I have met all the leaders, and I have listened to you very carefully.

You now have before you a final text, reviewed and amended overnight and again today.

I have written each of you a letter, outlining the procedure from here, in order for separate simultaneous referenda to be held on both sides in Cyprus on 24 April 2004 – and I hope, for the future – of Cypress to access to the European Union on 1 May 2004.

We have arrived at this point following talks on the island, and now, during this last week, a concentrated effort of stock.

The six weeks of negotiations and consultations that have conducted were conducted within an unavoidably tight schedule.

There has been intense public interest, and the press has played a part in encouraging a lively debate.

Even in the last two days, there has been much speculation about the revised plan. Many of the positive elements have been lost sight of in the discussion.

It has been a more workable scheme than is sometimes thought. It has better safeguards for the constituent states.

It has transitional arrangements that I am confident will work.

And it has been improved from the financial and economic point of view since that revision was presented on Monday, further refinements have been made.

As a result, the plan now before you is very different from the proposal that was in front of you for the past year.

The process of negotiation is not a football match. It is not about keeping score of goals and own goals, of winners and losers.

Rather, we have tried to accommodate the expressed concerns of both sides, so as to create a win-win situation. I believe that we have succeeded. But the time has come for the leaders, and for voters in both communities, to assess what is before them as an overall package in the run-up to the referenda.

As the people of Cyprus, north and south, and debate and consider their future over the next three and a half weeks, they will be looking to you, their leaders, for guidance.

You have undertaken the responsibility of organising referenda. You have a responsibility to inform the people about the plan on which they will be asked to say yes or no, so that each voter can make up his or her own mind.

Closing of the Cyprus Talks

This plan is inevitably a compromise. It does not satisfy everyone’s demands. But I believe it meets the core interests, and addresses the key concerns of people on both sides.

Let me be clear. The choice is not between this settlement plan and some other magical or mythical solution. In reality, at this stage, the choice is between this settlement and no settlement.

If the settlement is approved in the referendum next month, Cyprus would reunify, in time to accede to the European Union. After only a short interval, freedom of movement would prevail, without border-like checkpoints.

A new state of affairs would emerge, far better designed than the one of 1960 to manage relations between the two communities.

A substantial number of Greek Cypriots would be able to return to the homes they left behind 30 years ago, and to do so under Greek Cypriot administration. Others would receive full and effective compensation.

Cypriots from both sides could return to their homes in the area administered by the other Constituent State.

Some Turkish Cypriots might have to move, though fewer than is sometimes thought. There would be time for this to be organised properly, and adequate measures would be taken, with the help of the international community, to ensure that they have adequate alterna- tive housing and opportunities to the reunification.

For Turkish Cypriots, the decades of isolation would come to an end, and they would come together with Greek Cypriots under the protective European mantle, as equal partners in the new state of affairs.

The United Nations would strengthen its operation in Cyprus, and help the Cypriots implement the settlement.

The European Union would accommodate the settlement and provide the important political and financial support for its implementation.

Military forces would be substantially reduced during a transitional phase, and be halved again seven years from now. In time they would reduce to the moderate levels foreseen in the 1960 Treaty of Alliance.

The Federal government would be established, together with two Constituent states, one with a clearly identifiable Greek Cypriot identity, and the other distinctly Turkish Cypriot, both largely running their own affairs.

I hope the working of the Federal government would provide mechanisms to encourage people from both sides to work together.

Cyprus would be a full member of the European Union, based upon the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights.

One person says that reunification will be.

Yes, there will be plenty of challenges along the way – but the plan gives you a structure that can help you meet them.

Yes, it will cost money – though less than is sometimes thought.

This plan is fair. It is designed to work. And I believe it provides Cypriots with a secure framework for a common future.

At the end of the day, of course, it does not matter what I think. It is what the people think that counts. They decide – and rightly so.

This is a moment of high drama. It is inevitable that there should be tensions and uncertainty. Everyone wants to be sure that this settlement will bring about a better future for Cyprus and for their posterity.

No one can be certain of what the future holds. But I am certain that my settlement plan offers the best and fairest chance of peace, prosperity and stability that is ever likely to be on offer.

There have been too many missed opportunities in the past. For the sake of all of you and your people, I urge you not to make the same mistake again.

Let us seize this chance for peace in a United Cyprus Republic.”

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For the people of Cyprus, the next month [April] is the most critical in the last 30 years as they decide whether to reunite their country on the basis of Kofi Annan’s settlement plan. Achieving a Cyprus settlement is a complex task, legally and politically, he stated. The result would be a bicomunal, bizonal, federal system, a State of Cyprus with a single international legal personality, sovereignty and citizenship, based on the principle of political equality between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

He said that the plan to be placed before the people had been finalised, and that the SG approved it, but it was not his invention. Before the people was a plan that embodied the key concepts and trade-offs that had emerged from a long process of negotiation.

The 9,000-page text containing the basic settlement plan, which calls for a federal government composed of two constituent states – as well as legal formulas and other supervisory bodies, was made available to Council members in electronic format on the Council’s website – www.un.org and www.annanplan.org – and that it could also be found on the United Nations website – www.un.org.

Summarizing the main improvements to the plan, de Soto said that, by far, the most important change related to the question of property to people who had been dispossessed. The revised scheme was fairer, simpler, and more certain. That would increase the amount of land not related to other land that was also increase significantly the number of displaced and dispossessed persons who would be reinstated to some of their property. At the same time, it would give more certainty to current users.

He said that certain non-discriminatory restrictions on the acquisition of property in the Turkish Cypriot state would be eliminated. The SG had designed to prevent either side from being overrun by unrestricted establishment of residence, unrestricted immigration, or unlimited property purchases in a transitional period, and to ensure that the identify of Cyprus and its constituent states was maintained. There were no permanent derogations from the “acquis communautaire”.

The workings of the federal government had also been revised in three important respects, he continued. First, the long transitional periods for finalizing the constitution of the Presidential Council had been replaced by a much shorter period, with full elections to be held at the federal and constituent state levels within one year of the accord. Second, the structure of the Presidential Council had been altered, with nine members rather than six, and with provision for two persons not hailing from the same constituent state to co-rotate in the office of the President and the Vice-President in three 20-month periods over the 60-month term of the Presidential Council.

Third, voting for the Senate would be on the basis of mother tongue, rather than on the basis of internal citizenship status, to ensure that political equality could not be undermined over time. The improvements had been made regarding the economic and financial aspects of the plan, largely based on the agreed recommendations of experts from each side in the technical committees.

The map in the plan had not changed, he continued. But an important new element had been introduced, which bore directly to the Security Council. It was envisaged that, in the last months of each phased hand-over of territory, the supervision by the UN of the activities relating to the transfer of areas of government adjustment shall be enhanced in the relevant areas. New details of measures to assist in relocation of persons who must move as a result of territorial adjustment had been introduced into the plan.

Important refinements had been made regarding security, he said, in at least three respects. First, the provisions relating to troop withdrawal had been altered. The revised plan, 6,000 Greek and Turkish troops were permitted to remain in Cyprus, on the proviso that all would leave should Turkey accede to the EU. The revised plan provided for 6,000 to drop to 3,000 in 2011. It further provided for the 3,000 to drop in 2018, or upon Turkey’s EU accession, whichever was earlier, to the 950 Greek and 650 Turkish troops permitted under the 1960 Treaty of Alliance, and for three yearly reviews of troop levels, but with a view to total withdrawal by mutual consent.

Second, the role of the Monitoring Committee envisaged under the plan had been strengthened, with the parties undertaking to report to it in cases of violations. The mandate of the UN operation had been strengthened, not only to provide for the assumption of territorial responsibility, but also for the establishment by the SG of a bimodal, bizonal, federal system, a State of Cyprus with a single international legal personality, sovereignty and citizenship.

What was now before the people was a plan that embodied the key concepts and trade-offs that had emerged from a long process of negotiation. The improvements made in it, while not agreed, reflected the material put forward in intensive negotiations that resumed on 19 February.

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**Wettest Winter on Record**

The wettest winter on record in Cyprus has proved beneficial for the island's water reserves with most dams overflowing by February and the largest, the Kourris dam in Limassol, overflowing on 4 March for the first time since it was built in 1988.

With the dams at 98% of capacity, they can supply the irrigation needs of the areas they serve for the next two to three years.

The Kourris dam, 550 m wide and 110 m high and with a lake surface of 3.6 sq.km, holds as much water as all the rest put together. Fed by the Kourris, Kyros and Limnitis rivers, it has a total capacity of 115 m tons of water. It also receives some water from a diversion on the Arminou reservoir, 14.5 km away to the west, via an underground pipe. The rains broke more than records this winter, however. UNFICYP engineers and building maintenance were hard at work throughout the winter months, repairing flood damage to buildings and other installations.

However, as Cyprus regularly experiences extended periods of drought, the increased water intake in the dams does not mean that we should forget water conservation measures especially now that the hot summer months are approaching.

By following a number of water saving measures, which require little time and money to implement, not just during drought conditions but year-round, significant amounts of water can be saved.

- Check the plumbing installation for leaks.
- Check taps for drips and make repairs promptly.
- Install plastic water bags in the toilet flush tanks.
- Take a shower instead of a bath and avoid having to run the water until it’s hot. Turn off shower water while you apply soap to body.
- Encourage and advise children not to mess around with water in the bath, garden or anywhere else.
- Turn off water while you shave and/or brush teeth.
- Wash only full loads in the washing and dish washing machines.
- Water the garden with a watering can early in the morning or in the evening when evaporation is limited.
- Wash the car with a sponge and a bucket, instead of a hosepipe.
- Use a broom, not a hose, to clean verandas and pavements.

**St. Patrick’s Day: A Holiday in Cyprus**

This year in Cyprus, the Irish UNFICYP and Irish UNICIVPOL and Irish Army Contingents co-hosted the celebration in honour of their patron saint. The festivities commenced with a Catholic mass, followed by an inter-denominational service at Saint Columba’s Church, UNPA. The co-celebrants were Father Jason Donohoe, who travelled from island to island from Enniscorthy, County Wexford, and Padre Lee Gandiya, who, of course, is based here with UNFICYP’s British Contingent.

Afterwards the receptions began at the Irish Ambassador’s residence, hosted by H.E. Mr. John Swift and his wife Jean. The celebration continued at the International Mess in the UNPA, where a large gathering enjoyed excellent food, wine, Irish coffees and, of course, Irish music, singing and dancing. The Argentinian band also performed, thanks to Lt. Col. G Motta, Commanding Officer of Sector One. And, of course, that well-known traditional fiddler, Insp. Krishnanabal, was there, playing a medley of Indian jigs and reels!

Ambassador Swift addressed the distinguished gathering on behalf of the Irish Government. Among those present were former Irish Prime Minister Dr. Garret Fitzgerald, as well as the Chief of Mission and the Force Commander. The party later continued into the night at the CIVPOL Club.

UNFICYP’s hosts thank all who honoured them with their company and attendance, and for making Saint Patrick’s Day 2004 one to remember.

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The 17th of March, Saint Patrick’s Day, is Ireland’s national holiday. Because the Irish, through emigration and missionary work, have set up communities all over the world, Saint Patrick’s Day is celebrated around the globe.

Saint Patrick came to Ireland on a slave ship in the year 432 AD while still a boy. It is believed that his country of origin was either England or France.

Later, St. Patrick left Ireland for Rome where he studied and was ordained as a priest. He returned to Ireland to preach the gospel. Ireland at the time was a pagan country.

The Blue Beret
The Cultural Heritage of Cyprus • Part XXI
A Record of the Ages: The Cyprus Museum

Located in central Nicosia at No. 14 Museum avenue, the Cyprus Museum is a neo-classical limestone building that was constructed, beginning in 1908, in memory of Britain’s Queen Victoria. The museum, which is the latest destination for the Blue Beret’s series on the cultural heritage of Cyprus, has been renovated and enlarged several times, and now houses Cypriot antiquities from the Neolithic period to the beginning of the Middle Ages.

Room I
contains items from the Neolithic (7000 to 3000 BC) and Chalcolithic (3000 to 2300 BC) civilizations. These include stone and ceramic implements, votive offerings, home utensils, industrial and farming tools, jewellery and statuettes. Of special interest are stone utensils from Khirkiotika, Neolithic pottery from Sotira and Khirokitia, and a display case with cruciform idols of deities.

Room II
contains red-slip pottery from the Early Bronze Age (2300 to 1850 BC) from the necropolises of Vounous and Dendia. Some examples of this pottery have incised or raised decorations, while others take the shape of animals or birds. Of special interest are complex vases with many spouts, and a clay model of a sanctuary from Vounous.

Room III
covers a wide variety of pottery from the Middle Bronze Age to the end of the Roman period (1850 BC to 395 AD). Here, pottery is grouped by period and style. There are beautiful Middle Bronze Age geometric jugs, Cypro-Mycenaean masterpieces with exquisite designs, vases from the Cypro-Geometric period (1050 to 750 BC), and a series of jugs decorated with concentric circles. This room also displays bi-chrome (two-colour) vases from the Cypro-Archaic period (750 to 450 BC). Imported pottery from Greece (red figures on a black background or black figures on a red background) is also on exhibit here, as well as Cypro–Roman “terra sigillata” (relief) jugs.

Room IV
is mostly dedicated to clay votive offerings from the Ayia Irini sanctuary (approximately 1200 BC) that was excavated in 1929 by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition. They comprise human figures, centaurs, horsemen, chariots, horses and bulls. The Egyptian influence is very clear.

Room V
shows the development of sculpture from the Cypro-Archaic through the Roman periods. These include statues of gods and goddesses, young men and girls, priests and priestesses, and sphinxes and lions. Of special interest are the female stone head (No. XLII) from the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Arsolos village, as well as the famous Aphrodite of Soli.

Room VI
is dedicated to Roman sculptures in stone, marble and bronze. Some of the statues are of outstanding quality, such as the large bronze statue of the Roman Emperor Septimus Severus (119 to 211 AD) from Kythira and the small marble statue of the woman with a dolphin), a reclining river god, a seated Zeus, his wife Hera, Asklepios (god of medicine), Hygeia (goddess of health), Nemesis, the upper part of Heracles, Isis, and Meleager.

Room VII
is dedicated to the development of the Cypriot scripts, starting from the as-yet undeciphered Cypro-Minoan syllabary dating from the 15th to the 11th centuries BC, and the Cypro-Mycenaean period (12th to 11th centuries BC), and the Greek and Phoenician alphabets that are inscribed on various ceramic, bronze or stone items. Of particular note is a copy of a bronze tablet from the Cypriot syllabary, which is the first recorded medical contract in Cyprus. It was taken out between King Stassikypiros (of the city of Idalion) and the medical doctor Osanlos (and his brothers) for the free treatment of the wounded during the Persian siege of Idalion (5th century BC). The original is kept at the Bibliotheque Nationale de Paris.

Room VIII
is the basement, where there are six tomb reconstructions. Number One dates from the Chalcolithic period, and shows a tomb outside the wall of a hut. Number Two is an Early Bronze Age rock-cut tomb with a side-chamber containing offerings. Number Four is a Late Bronze Age tomb with two distinct burial layers, dating from the 13th century BC. Number Five is an Early Iron Age rock-cut tomb with a long passage and a square side-chamber containing geometrical vases. The skeleton in the passage belonged to an attendant. Number Six dates to the 5th century BC. It is a rock-cut tomb and consists of a passage with many steps and a square chamber. Facing these tombs is a replica of the entrance of the funeral chamber of a royal tomb at Pyla (5th century BC).

Room IX
contains stone and terracotta sarcophagi, funerary urns and stelae. The stele of the Greek soldier, armed with a javelin and a dagger, and another of a seated female (Aristea from Salamis) found at Marion (middle 5th century BC) are quite outstanding.

Room X
is dedicated to the development of the Cypriot scenes, starting from the as-yet undeciphered Cypro-Minoan syllabary dating from the 15th to the 11th centuries BC, and the Cypro-Mycenaean period (12th to 11th centuries BC), and the Greek and Phoenician alphabets that are inscribed on various ceramic, bronze or stone items. Of particular note is a copy of a bronze tablet from the Cypriot syllabary, which is the first recorded medical contract in Cyprus. It was taken out between King Stassikypiros (of the city of Idalion) and the medical doctor Osanlos (and his brothers) for the free treatment of the wounded during the Persian siege of Idalion (5th century BC). The original is kept at the Bibliotheque Nationale de Paris.
On 27 February, Sector 4 once again held a ceremony to decorate 141 members of the Hungarian and Slovak Contingents with their United Nations peacekeeping medals.

Held in Athienou, the programme started with an honour guard and standard march on before the general salute to greet UNFICYP Force Commander Maj. Gen. Hebert Figoli.

The Force Commander inspected the parade. Then, in the presence of all guests, the peacekeepers were presented with their medal by the Force Commander, the Chief of Staff, Col. Ian Sinclair, CO Sector 1, Lt. Col. Gustavo Motta, the Hungarian Ambassador, H.E. János Kisfalvi, and the Slovak Ambassador, H.E. Dr. Ján Varšo.

The Force Commander then addressed the medal recipients and guests, praising the work of the Hungarian and Slovak soldiers of Sector 4 and their unstinting devotion to duty.

All present were then invited to a splendid array of typical dishes from Hungary and the Republic of Slovakia.

Sector 1’s medal parade was held 2 March at Camp San Martín. The ceremony was attended by Chief of Mission, Mr. Zbigniew Wlosowicz and Force Commander, Maj. General Hebert Figoli, in addition to the Ambassadors of Cuba and Spain, official representatives from Chile, France, Germany, Russia, UK, and US also attended.

The ceremony began with a military parade. Medals were presented to the personnel of Argentine Work Force 22. Afterwards, a parade of forces paid tribute to the dignitaries.

Once the medal ceremony was finished, the guests and members of Sector 1 enjoyed themselves with folkloric Argentine music, tango and empanadas.

The medal parade for Sector 1’s staff in Camp Roca, took place on 19 March. Friends of Sector 1 from the north side of the island were invited.

In keeping with the Argentine tradition of hospitality, there was a festive reception afterwards.
Of Dolmans and Frogmen: RHA Full Dress Uniform

Since the arrival of the 3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery in Cyprus last November, many readers of the Blue Beret will have no doubt noticed their distinctive ceremonial full dress uniform, epitomising the traditional “dash and panache” of the Royal Horse Artillery.

The uniform itself originates from the 18th century, when the Royal Horse Artillery was formed as a rapidly deployable unit to support British mounted cavalry units. The tight overall trousers are specifically designed for riding, in the style of riding breeches. Although the soldier pictured wears the shorter boots from being lost, should it be struck from the crossbelt by an independent rough rider, who would ensure that both the sword and the soldier’s wrist were removed. Additional items such as materials for writing dispatches and maps could be carried in a bag known as a frock.

Finally, the gold knot attached to both the sword and the soldier’s wrist would be removed after the pouch could be snatched away from the crossbelt by an independent rough rider, who would ensure that both the sword and the soldier’s wrist were removed. Additional items such as materials for writing dispatches and maps could be carried in a bag known as a frock.

Trouble with shortages

True, the Indian Army had contributed some of its most distinguished soldiers to UNFICYP from the very outset of this mission. The Secretary-General appointed Lt. Gen. P. S. Gyani on 17 January 1964 as his personal representative to Cyprus. He was charged with reporting back to the SG how UN observers could function and be most effective in fulfilling the task as outlined in the request made by the Government of Cyprus and agreed to by the Governments of Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Thereafter, until his untimely death on the island in 1965, Gen. K.S. Thimmaiah was the UNFICYP Force Commander. Later, Lt. Gen. Prem Chand served as Force Commander.

Inevitably, there have been some adjustments. For example, with five of our eight-man contingent pure vegetarians, the Indian presence has been appreciated. The UNFICYP’s vegetarian menu presented some concern at the beginning of our tour. Perhaps the term “vegetarian dish” is interpreted a little differently here than at home. I cannot forget the day when the chef, at the request of the UNFICYP commander, prepared a vegetarian dish for the Indian contingent.

The parents of the baby were Turkish and treatment in the north was not available. With the help of UNFICYP, the situation was explained to the authorities in the south and the baby was immediately escorted and admitted to the Makarios Hospital in Nicosia.

The baby’s condition was extremely serious. It is to the credit of the doctors and nurses of the Makarios Hospital, who made an all-out effort on behalf of the child, that Oguzhan survived. Some of the nurses even brought clothes from their homes to help. The child had narrow yet miraculous escape.

For the Indians of UNFICYP, it was a noble task. We helped facilitate the visits of the parents, and also assisted with the liaison between the family and the hospital staff regarding the settlement of hospital charges.

On 2 March, the child was pronounced fit and discharged – a memorable moment for everyone. The humanitarian effort made by all was acknowledged when the Cypriot media broadcast the news island-wide. A sure step to proving that those on both sides of the divide are together in times of need.

Tribute to Lois

Lois Smart Hadjinestoros, born in Australia in 1946, was a much-loved wife, mother, and grandmother. She is affectionately put egg and fish on my plate, telling me he had prepared it for “the vegetarians”. Since then, however, the initiative taken by the Mess staff to serve at least one vegetarian curry with every meal has really been appreciated.

After four months with UNFICYP, an introductory note on the Indian Contingent may seem untimely. But if I don’t do it here, the purpose of writing this article will be defeated. Let me introduce (from the left) the members of our team in the photo below:


The Indians Arrive in UNFICYP

When eight Indian Police Officers landed at Larnaca Airport on 3 December 2003, they were the first Indian Civil Police deployed in the history of UNFICYP.

True, the Indian Army had contributed some of its most distinguished soldiers to UNFICYP from the very outset of this mission. The Secretary-General appointed Lt. Gen. P. S. Gyani on 17 January 1964 as his personal representative to Cyprus. He was charged with reporting back to the SG how UN observers could function and be most effective in fulfilling the task as outlined in the request made by the Government of Cyprus and agreed to by the Governments of Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom.


Policing the buffer zone, however, has given uniformed Indians a new profile in Cyprus. All Indian UNCIVPOL members here are veterans of previous UN missions such as Cambodia, Bosnia and Kosovo. It is, nevertheless, always a thrill to work with the UN and this time, it again proved to be the case.

All’s Well That Ends Well
Farewell to Mike Kelly

Michael (Mike) Kelly, who retired at the end of December 2003, first joined UNFICYP, in 1989, as Manager of the UNPA Officers’ Mess and then, in 1996, of the International Cafeteria when all the messes in the UNPA were amalgamated.

When United Nations Headquarters decided that catering services in the UNPA should be outsourced to a contractor Mike was eventually re-assigned as ISS Warehouse Supervisor in charge of ordering and issuing rations to the UNPA and Sectors. He was also responsible for the supervision of all the local staff within the unit in their daily duties.

Mike’s dedication to his work, efficiency, and loyalty to the Organisation would be hard to match. His cheerfulness, sense of humour and willingness to help at all times, will be missed around the UNPA.

Enjoy your retirement, Mike, and don’t fall off the ladder while painting and decorating your house!! SK

Lt. Col. Carlos Norberto Ferro, CO UN Flt

Lt. Col. Carlos Norberto Ferro joined UNFICYP on 27 January when he took over as CO UN Flight.

Born in Córdoba, Argentina, on 27 May 1960, Lt. Col. Ferro completed his high school studies in 1977. Four years later he graduated from the Argentinian Air Force Academy and, as a military pilot, was commissioned into the VII Air Brigade.

In 1982, he passed the helicopters pilot’s course, and in 1987 he completed a three-year course in computer systems. Two years later, he received a B.Sc. degree in computer engineering. In 1996 and 1997 he attended the Command and Staff course at the Air War School, and in 1998 he attended an International War Rights course. In 1999, he graduated in Aeronautical Systems.

During these years, Lt. Col. Ferro took part in various tasks such as medical evacuations, community support in flooded areas and several Antarctic campaigns. In 1998, he was in charge of the Presidential Squadron’s helicopter maintenance. During this time, he was part of the Presidential pilots’ team, flying the VIP S-70A Black Hawk and the S-76 Sikorsky Spirit. In addition, he completed several flight training courses in the USA.

Lt. Col. Ferro is married to Andrea Zulema Nuñez, and they have a nine-month-old daughter, Carola Nicole.

Lt. Col. Paul Quirke, LO NG

Lt. Col. Paul Quirke took over as UNFICYP’s Liaison Officer to the National Guard and Commander Irish Contingent on 24 February.

Lt. Col. Quirke was commissioned into the Irish Defence Forces in 1964. He completed the Standard Infantry Officers’ Course in 1970 and the Command and Staff Course in 1977.

In 1974, he received a Bachelor of Civil Law Degree (BCL) and in 1976 a Barrister at Law (BL). In 1990, he attended the Law and Armed Conflict Course in San Remo, Italy, and in 1998 he attended the Prosecution of War Crimes course in Geneva. He was promoted to the rank of Lt. Col in 1998.

Lt. Col. Quirke’s first tour of duty overseas was in 1966 as a Platoon Commander with the 8th Infantry Group in UNFICYP returning to Cyprus in 1972 as Ops/Int Off with the 23rd Infantry Group. He also served five tours of duty as a Legal Officer with UNPI.UL.

Lt. Col. Quirke is married to Noreen and they have three children, Lynda, Alan and Siobhan. He maintains a keen interest in sport and has represented the Army in Gaelic football, soccer, rugby and golf, winning a total of nine All Army medals.

HAPPY RETIREMENT

Having spent more than 30 years in the service of United Nations, Jan Johansson, the outgoing Chief Administrative Officer, has finally decided that his long-time wife Pip deserves a little more attention than he has been able to devote to her due to the many demands placed on him down the years.

During his service, Jan has worked for UNHCR as well as the UN Field Service (UNTSO, UNFICYP, UNMOGIP and UNDOF) before finally returning to UNFICYP.

In 1988, Jan joined the United Nations University (UNU) in Helsinki, Finland and was responsible for Administration and Finance at the World Institute for Development Economic Research (UNU/ WIDER) at the University’s first training and research centre. In 1993, he was transferred to Maastricht, the Netherlands, where he was responsible for establishing a second Research and Training Centre, the Institute for New Technologies (WIDER). On behalf of his many friends and colleagues, we wish Jan and Pip many years of good health, happiness and prosperity. Jan was replaced by Frank Clancy, who arrived in UNFICYP this month from UNHCR, Damascus.
THE COMMON POEM OF CYPRIOT POETS

YES: WHAT A JOYFUL WORD!

Yes, to a bird with open wings
To the open sky, to the open sea
Yes, to lips open to a smile
To a wish, to hope
Magical words
The revenge of silenced hearts against history
While kissing the wind of love
To share the same flame
Sing the same song
Be drunk with the same passion
Make love under the same moon
Let my heart my body be light
So that I can speak
What is Greek what is Turkish
Are they two houses exchanging each other
Are they two lives filled to the brim
Emptying themselves
into sand bags
Yes, I said as though drawing a beautiful bird
Nearing extinction
I am handing it over to you
So that you can add yet another colour
A bird hidden for so long in my heart
A YES bird; so close to bursting my heart open
Take this joy
Attach it to the bird’s wing
As though planting new saplings
In a beautiful forest
I sit, sweating, breathless
So as to send a wave from deep inside me
Look there, at the abyss of my heart
That thing amongst the flames is “Yes”
Life will fall, like a star
And we will also change
Yes, a palm open to the other
To the different, to the unknown
I passed through the border amongst
The rumble of thousands of migrating butterflies
I know this day of May will be the day
Oh wall
Your stones
We will bury
In the foundations of our common house
The whole universe
Fits into a single word!
Yes: What a joyful word!
To sing the song of heavenly love
Say Yes! To your good neighbours in exile
Open the doors ajar with your hands
Say yes! Let’s come out onto the doorsteps
Clean out our wounds
Kiss by kiss

(Nese Yasin, Filiz Naldöven, Lily Michailidou, Fikret Demirag, Elli Peonidou, Zeki Ali,
Takis Hadjiigeorgiou, Tamer Öncül, Feriha Altok, Neriman Cahit, M. Kansu,
Stephanos Stephanides, Gür Genç, Jenan Selçuk, Michalis Papadopoulos, Aydin Mehmet Ali)