BASIS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM

Resolution 1476 (2003)
Adopted by the Security Council at its 5449th meeting on
14 April 2003

The Security Council, recalling its resolution on the Cyprus question and the need to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement on the basis of the Annan Plan, and

Desiring to encourage the parties to take measures to achieve progress in the negotiations, requests that the Secretary-General report on the implementation of this resolution.

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United Nations Security Council
The Blue Beret

Security Council Resolution 1475

The Security Council,

Reaffirming all its resolutions on Cyprus, in particular resolution 1250 (1999) of 29 June 1999 aiming at achieving an agreement on a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Cyprus question in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions and treaties,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General of 1 April 2003 (S/2003/398) on his mission of good offices in Cyprus,

Considers the extraordinary effort made by the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser and his team which has secured preliminary agreement within the framework of the Security Council resolution 1250 (1999),

Further commends the Secretary-General for taking the initiative to present to the parties a comprehensive settlement plan aimed at bridging the gaps between them, in line with the statements of 16 December 1998 by the United Nations auspices and, following negotiations, to the Secretary-General's plan that on 10 December 2002 and 20 February 2003;

Regrets that, as described in the Secretary-General's report, due to the negative approach of the Turkish Cypriot leader, in his conclusion at the 10-11 March 2003 meeting in The Hague, it was not possible to reach agreement to put the plan to a referendum as suggested by the Secretary-General, and thus that the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots have been denied the opportunity to decide for themselves on a plan that would have permitted the roundabout avoidance of the consequences it will not be possible to achieve a comprehensive settlement before 16 April 2003;

Stresses that the Secretary-General's carefully balanced plan of 26 February 2003 as a unique basis for further negotiation is still accessible to negotiate within the framework of the Secretary-General's Good Offices, using the plan to reach a comprehensive settlement as has been asked by the Secretary-General in his report;

Stresses its full support for the Secretary-General's mission of Good Offices as entrusted to him in resolution 1250 (1999) and asks the Secretary-General to continue to make available his Good Offices for Cyprus as outlined in his report;

Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

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The Council has before it the Secretary-General’s written report on his efforts between late 1999 and 11 March 2003 to assist the two sides in Cyprus to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem.

This is the first written report on the Secretary-General’s mission of good offices since June of 1999. It covers a long period of negotiations. It describes the thinking behind the Secretary-General’s comprehensive proposals. It makes a number of observations about the process and the way ahead. Hence its length.

There is no need for the parties to the conflict to speak for itself and I only wish to add a few comments.

The Cyprus problem is the oldest item continually on the Secretary-General’s peace-making agenda. It is difficult to see a set of circumstances for achieving a settlement as propitious as that which presently exists and, last, without the leaders.

In terms of the wider political environment in the region, all the conditions were in place. In addition, the Secretary-General himself was deeply and heavily involved in the effort, throwing his full backing behind it. The Council strongly supported him every step of the way. And, I believe, a fair and honourable package, comprehensive in approach and only needing technical finalization, was on the table.

The fact that a solution has not been achieved in these circumstances is therefore deeply disappointing. It seems attributable to failings of political will rather than to the absence of favourable circumstances. Obviously, towards the end of the process, when decisions had to be made, the crisis in Iraq loomed large and made it difficult, particularly for Turkey, to take the bold decisions, and bring the necessary influence to bear, in order to achieve a settlement. Be that as it may, a unique opportunity to solve the problem at hand and the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots have been denied the opportunity to vote to reunify Cyprus and establish a bi-communal, bi-national state. The last and deep regrets.

The immediate losers are the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey, but the Greek Cypriots and Greece are also losers – this is truly a lose-lose kind of settlement. The Secretary-General’s proposal is deeply regrettable.

This is why the opportunity was missed are contained in his report. If the failure of this effort tells us anything, it confirms something that we already knew – this is one of the most difficult, if not the most difficult, diplomatic problems in the world. This is why the Secretary-General believes that it would be a great step backward if the plan were simply allowed to wither away.

Of course, like all human endeavours, the plan is not perfect. Mr. Papadopoulos has made a number of different views of the Annexes particularly in the details. But the plan represents the best effort of the United Nations to generate a balanced and truly comprehensive package which resolves all issues, least of all to be negotiated, and above all, represents a fair and honourable settlement which meets the aspirations of both communities. It is based on a three-and-a-half year process of unprecedented intensity and stands on the shoulders of four decades of UN peace-making efforts in Cyprus.

I urge the large number of the Council to not underestimate what an extraordinarily difficult task it is to achieve an overall balance on the range of issues that must be settled. Every word in the plan is carefully considered and separated from others. It is based on a three-and-a-half year process of unprecedented intensity and stands on the shoulders of four decades of UN peace-making efforts in Cyprus.

In large measure of the Council not to underestimate what an extraordinarily difficult task it is to achieve an overall balance on the range of issues that must be settled. Every word in the plan is carefully considered and separated from others. It is based on a three-and-a-half year process of unprecedented intensity and stands on the shoulders of four decades of UN peace-making efforts in Cyprus.

The plan was worked on many times, carefully calibrated, and weighed in the light of the many compromises. It was written that the plan is like an Alexannder Cabaret mobile. All aspects are interconnected. If any significant piece is removed and the balance is altered, it can fail to this fit to the two leaders. Excerpts from the Secretary-General’s report gives his views as to why the process was not successful, and outlines what he believes the best way forward. The criteria to maintain the basic principles or key trade-offs in the plan. In the coming period, after the signature of the EU accession treaty on 16 April, through the entire period of that treaty on 1 May 2004, and in the run-up to the European Council of December 2004 in which a decision is to be taken on accession talks with Turkey, the overwhelming need is for the parties to hew closely to the plan. To reopen its basic principles or key trade-offs would be to put the entire negotiations at risk.

That is why Mr. Denktaş’s suggestion in The Hague - that the parties should return to a discussion on principles - did not, in the Secretary-General’s view, bring any hope that agreement could be achieved; and equally why Mr. Papadopoulos’s pressure not to restore the substantive parts of the plan if Mr. Denktaş’s suggestion in The Hague was accepted in the same manner was welcomed. The Secretary-General believes that the hope must be that, in time, the Turkish Cypriot side will come around to the same position that Mr. Papadopoulos took in The Hague.

In the Secretary-General’s view, the point had been reached where if the parties to the dispute on the Cypriot side should accept that the plan couldn’t be significantly improved by further negotiation, and therefore that they should be prepared to finalize it and put it to referendum. This is what the Secretary-General said to the leaders when he was in Cyprus. Without that honest intellectual realisation on the part of both sides, and without the leaders being prepared to explain this to the people, it is difficult to see a settlement being achieved.

Looking to the future, as his report outlines, the Secretary-General does not intend to take a new initiative unless and until such time as he has solid reason to believe that the political will exists necessary for a successful outcome. This would come about if there was an unequivocally-stated preparedness on the part of the leaders of both sides, fully and determinedly backed at the highest political level in both motherlands, to commit (a) to finalize the plan (without re-opening its basic principles or key trade-offs) to a vote at referendum; (b) to put it to separate simultaneous referenda as provided for in the plan; and (c) to accept the results of the referenda – the leaders – to demonstrate the political will to solve the problem on the basis of his plan, in the manner in which the Secretary-General’s plan....

Since the events described in this report, Mr. Denktaş has written to the United Nations proposing that he continue to discuss a range of confidence-building measures. Mr. Denktaş was motivated to do this, according to his letter, to address the deep crisis of confidence which he believes exists between the two sides, and which in his view was a major cause of the stalemate at The Hague.

Mr. Papadopoulos responded that, in his view, the stalemate was caused not by a crisis of confidence but by Mr. Denktaş and Turkey not accepting the Secretary-General’s plan as the basis for a negotiating final settlement. Mr. Papadopoulos restated in the most clear terms that he remains committed, even after 16 April, to finding a solution within the parameters of the Secretary-General’s plan, and called on Mr. Denktaş to indicate that he accepts the Secretary-General’s plan as the basis for a further negotiating Exercise.

Mr. Denktaş responded restating his conviction that a crisis of confidence has obstructed all efforts, including the most recent one, to resolve the Cyprus problem, and said that his confidence building proposals remain on the table. He reaffirmed a point made in his earlier letter, namely, that he continues to support the good offices mission of the Secretary-General – on this he and Mr. Papadopoulos appear to be in agreement. However, Mr. Denktaş, without accepting the Secretary-General’s plan as the basis for a further negotiating process, proposed that the leaders should discuss the areas where they want to present; if they agreed, put the plan to referendum. To our knowledge, Mr. Papadopoulos has not responded to this further letter at this time. As the Secretary-General’s report gives his views as to why the process was not successful, and outlines what he believes the best way forward. The criteria to maintain the basic principles or key trade-offs in the plan. In the coming period, after the signature of the EU accession treaty on 16 April, through the entire period of that treaty on 1 May 2004, and in the run-up to the European Council of December 2004 in which a decision is to be taken on accession talks with Turkey, the overwhelming...
Summary

Under my auspices, an intensive effort was undertaken between 1999 and early 2003 to assist the two leaders of Cyprus to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. This effort was undertaken in the context of a unique opportunity which, had it been seized, would have allowed a reunited Cyprus to sign the Treaty of Accession to the European Union. Proximity talks were held from December 1999 to November 2000, and direct talks from January 2002 to February 2003. During this period, I endeavored to reach a settlement agreement without third-party assistance. Accordingly, I submitted a comprehensive settlement proposal on 11 November 2002, and a revised version on 12 December 2002, and a second revision on 26 February 2003. The plan required a referendum before 16 April 2003 to approve it and reunify Cyprus. At The Hague on 10 and 11 March 2003, it became clear that it would not be possible to achieve agreement to conduct such a referendum, and the process came to an end. My plan remains on the table, and I do not propose to take a new initiative without a solid reason to believe that the political will exists necessary for a successful Agreement.

Excerpts from the Secretary-General’s Report on his Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus

An overview of the process (paras 8-14)

The main events in the process are described in the calendar annexed to this report. From December 1999 to November 2000, the leaders, at my invitation, attended five sessions of proximity talks, alternately in Geneva and New York. A foundation for meaningful negotiations leading to a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem was established at these talks, which were otherwise hosted by my Special Adviser. This process ended when Mr. Denktash did not accept the invitation to a sixth session of talks in January 2001.

Efforts to resume the process, including a meeting I held with Mr. Denktash in August 2001, led to my invitation of 5 September 2001 to the two leaders to meet for a new round of negotiations. Mr. Clerides accepted the invitation but Mr. Denktash declined it.

In November 2001, Mr. Denktash wrote to Mr. Clerides proposing a direct meeting. There followed an exchange of letters, as a result of which they met for the first time in mid-December 2001 in the presence of my Special Adviser and agreed to begin direct talks in Cyprus the following month under my auspices. After a gap, the two leaders dined at each other’s residences.

The way ahead (paras 144-148)

As I made clear in my statement to The Hague on 30 March 2003, I believe that the end has been reached in the effort that began late in 1999. The window of opportunity that opened then was closed by Mr. Denktash’s refusal to meet in The Hague on 11 November 2002, when, no breakthrough having been achieved, and believing that no other course of action was possible to achieve a reunification and a comprehensive settlement, following intensive consultations, I put forward a revised proposal on 10 December 2002, and invited the leaders to meet in time for the Copenhagen European Council on 12 and 13 December 2002.

Regrettably, agreement was not reached at that time but negotiations resumed on the island in mid-January 2003. In parallel, technical committees agreed to the leaders in my presence on 4 October 2002 in New York, began meeting, following a three-month delay on the part of Mr. Denktash in appointing the Turkish Cypriot representatives. Greece and Turkey met on 21 February to address security issues related to the plan.

In the last week of February 2003, I visited Turkey, Greece and Cyprus, formally presented a third version of my plan on 26 February, and invited the leaders to The Hague on 10 March to inform me whether they were prepared to sign an agreement with the plan for approval at separate simultaneous referenda in the two parts in March 2003. On 11 March and following negotiations with the two leaders and the guarantor powers, the process ended and at that point the process which had begun in December 1999 reached the end of the road. The office in Cyprus of my Special Adviser, which operated in advance of the direct talks, is to close during April.

The Secretary-General’s Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus

Calendar of Main Events, June 1999-April 2003

22 Jun: Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/1999/707)
1 Nov: Appointment of Alvaro de Soto as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus
3-13 Dec: First session of proximity talks, New York, with Glafcos Clerides, the Greek Cypriot leader, and Rauf Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot leader
10 Dec: Helsinki European Council
31 Jan:
8 Feb: Second session of proximity talks, Geneva
15 Feb: The conclusion of proximity talks, Geneva
24 Jul:
4 Aug: Continuation of third session of proximity talks, Geneva
9-26 Sep: Fourth session of proximity talks, Geneva
12 Sep: Statement by the Secretary-General to the parties
1-8 Nov: Fifth session of proximity talks, Geneva
8 Nov: Secretary-General’s oral remarks to the parties; Mr. Denktash declines invitation to participate in further proximity talks
14 Nov: Secretary-General addresses a gathering of the United Nations Unionists for Foreign Affairs, Brussels
28 Aug: Secretary-General meets Mr. Denktash in Salzburg
5 Sep: Secretary-General invites leaders to new and reinvigorated phase of talks; Mr. Clerides accepts; Mr. Denktash declines
Nov: Exchange of letters between Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash leads to agreement to meet face-to-face in the presence of a United Nations representative
4 Dec: Meeting between Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash, Nicosia, north Cyprus
5 Dec: Clerides dines at the residence of Mr. Denktash, north Nicosia
11 Mar: Secretary-General’s mission of good offices in Cyprus concludes
29 Dec: Mr. Denktash dines at the residence of Mr. Clerides

I propose to take a new initiative, unless and until such time as, I am given solid reason to believe that the political will exists necessary for a successful Agreement. I have already indicated publicly that I do not believe that such an opportunity will occur any time soon. I do believe, however, that it would be a great step backward if the plan as such were to simply wither away.

In my view, a solution on the basis of the plan could be achieved only if there is an unequivocally stated preparedness on the part of the leaders of both sides, fully and permanently backed at the highest political level in both capitals, to commit themselves (a) to finalize the plan (without reopening its basic principles or essential trade-offs) by a specific date with United Nations assistance, and (b) to put it simultaneous referendum as provided for in the plan on a date certain soon thereafter.

To access the Secretary-General’s full report to the Security Council, go to: www.un.org/docs/sc
To access the full text of the plan - Basis for a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem (Revision: 26 February 2003), to
www.cyprus.un-plan.org

April 2003 - The Blue Beret

Extracts from the Secretary-General’s Report on his Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus

My Special Adviser helped to guide the discussions and by mid-2002, he was making concrete suggestions to assist the parties to build bridges. I refrained throughout from pushing a publicly a position that I did not believe that such an opportunity will occur any time soon. I do believe, however, that it would be a great step backward if the plan as such were to simply wither away.

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Mobile Force Reserve APC Platoon

By Lt. Claudio Ordóñez

The Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) Platoon is an essential part of the Mobile Force Reserve, consisting entirely of Argentine soldiers. The Platoon has 13 members, one APC platoon commander, three mechanics and nine drivers.

The MFR demands a quick response from the APC platoon, which must be prepared to provide both vehicles and drivers at short notice on demand. The “TACTICA” provides high-speed, armoured protection and personnel load capability, which make it a perfect tool to carry out tasks in a tense environment. All nine TACTICA are maintained completely by their drivers and the specialist three-man mechanic team. They are responsible for the good condition of the vehicles, servicing them daily to keep the TACTICA best operating conditions.

The TACTICA, a 4x4 vehicle designed by Globber Webb, first served as an armoured patrol vehicle with police forces. Since July 1997, the Argentinian Con-tinent in the MFR has been successfully conducting mobile patrols within the BZ. Increased patrols are often required during the hunting season. Essentially, however, the TACTICA is used for crowd control during demonstrations.

Ringside Reserves

By L/Cdr. W. Smith

In early March 2003, the roof of the UNPA gym began shaking with the impact of the heavy punching bag being pounded with precision force. In the yard outside the gym L/Cdr. Ahmed, Smith, Bdr. Spriggs, Gns. Fuller, Lawerson, Gilbert, and MCpl. Sanchez of ARGCON were back in training again.

The training was in preparation for the Army Individual Novices Competition to be held in the UK in April this year where the 21 Air Assault Battery will be represented by L/Cdr. Ahmed and Smith. Their training began in early December 2002 with ringcraft, footwork, stance and defence.

For L/Cdr. Ahmed it was a case of getting back into a well-rehearsed routine, having boxed as an amateur with well-regarded “pros” including Michael Gomez. For L/Cdr. Smith it was a chance to learn new skills and try different approaches to boxing. In March, they moved up a gear to include sparring and hone the skills they practised on the bag and pads. However, it’s not all boxing, with many a run and weights session, helping to increase punching power.

For others, such as Bdr. Spriggs (best boxer in the 2001 Inter-Battery competition) and Gns. Gilbert (several bouts as a junior when younger), it is a chance to keep fit with a bit of a difference. All members of the squad have shown great enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. The gunners have used this training as a stepping-stone to increasing their fitness in preparation for “p-company” (pre-parachute selection) on return from operational duties. Boxing requires a healthy measure of confidence and courage, and MCpl. Sanchez has demonstrated plenty of both, always keen to practice his newfound skills.

Many thanks to L/Cdr. Ahmed for all the time he has put in to the squad’s training and good luck to all the squad members whether they are involved in competitive bouts or simply continuing their training.

Lots of Bidding for Lots as FMPU Raises £4,100

By Sgtt. D. Bates

Despite their bit for the community in Cyprus, the FMPU held a charity auction on 5 April to raise funds for two children’s charities on the island, the Greek Cypriot, Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation and the Turkish Cypriot SOS charity.

After setting the problems of: “What do we have to auction?” and “Where would we find items that people would give us and that other people would want to buy?”, nine weeks of begging from firms, businesses, travel agents and all manner of people for lots that we could auction began. This meant numerous letters, faxes, telephone calls and good old-fashioned foot slogging, during the evenings and at weekends.

We were pleasantly surprised at people’s generosity and we eventually ended up with over 140 items. These included cruises, weekend breaks, restaurant meals, diving lessons, jewellery and many other generous donations. Now that we had the items to sell, we needed the people to buy them. A media campaign was launched on Lotus Notes, with posters, flyers and BFBS radio broadcasts, in the hope of attracting people with money to spend. As the day drew closer, we decided that in addition to the auction during the day, we would have a disco in the evening. This then made us think that families would be attending for the auction (hopefully) in which case we also needed entertainment for the children and food for all, should they get peckish. Thus came the idea of making more money by donating the food profits and the FPM also kindly agreed that all bar profits for the day could be added to the takings. What had started out as a simple auction had quickly become a family day out.

Saturday 5 April dawned warm but cloudy. The scene was set and all the lots were ready. I knew that the lots were there but we needed the people and the weather. Thankfully, neither let us down. Despite the initial panic of the bouncy castles not turning up or the ice cream van breaking down, both arrived and were well utilized. There was still much to do to ensure that the day ran smoothly. Not only did the auction need to go well, but there was also car parking, creche facilities and a whole host of other problems to sort out.

Sgtt. Danny Bevan, who did a good job of separating people from their money, handled the bidding side. Sgtt. John Murray and WO2 Jaqui Collins donned flat caps and overalls to display the items. The rest of the FMPU team were employed on security, car parking, escort duties and when they could, bidding for items. The day was very well attended and our collective thanks go to those who participated and bought something. The hard work and professionalism of the FMPU team ensured that the event ran smoothly and as a result, the impressive sum of £4,100 was raised for the charities.

Check In, Check Up

Members of the FMPU were once again involved in the routine pre-departure luggage search of departing HUNCON and SLOWCON personnel from Famagusta during the April rotation to ensure that dangerous cargo is not carried on the aircraft.

New security regulations, brought about as a result of 11 September, dictate that the following items are not carried: corkscrews, darts, knives, nail files, etc. They free entitlements include 200 cigarettes OR 100 small cigars OR 50 cigars OR 250 tobacco, as well as 1 litre of spirits OR 2 litres of wine (fortified or otherwise) and 1 small bottle of perfume not exceeding .06 litres.
In classical times, the mountain of Stavrovouni was known as Olympus, and at its peak, a temple of Aphrodite became a place of pilgrimage. Despite having been abandoned and rebuilt numerous times over the ensuing centuries, Stavrovouni’s pilgrimage site today, deeply meaningful to the Greek Orthodox community.

Eclesiastical tradition has it that Stavrovouni was one of three churches founded on Cyprus by Saint Helen, Empress of the third century, who, according to Constantine the Great, had sent her to Jerusalem in search of the Holy Crucifix. In 327, as she was returning to Constantinople with the Holy Cross, a church was also consecrated in silver in 1702, and over the centuries, it has been spared the damage that has befallen many sites on the island: this is thought to be the site of the oldest religious buildings on the island.

The legend continues that when she awoke, she discovered that the Cross of the Good (or Penitent) Thief – again, versions differ, calling it the Holy Cross – had been miraculously transported to the top of a nearby mountain, where tradition holds the temple of the island.

In recognition of the Cross, Saint Helen built a church over the temple ruins, and donated the Cross of the Penitent Thief to it, along with a splinter from the Holy Crucifix. The mountaintop was later renamed Stavrovouni, meaning Mountain of the Cross. Saint Helen is also credited with sending the first monks here from Palestine – and the first monastic cells to deal with the snakes.

Originally an Orthodox monastery of the Basilian Order, the monastery also flourished under the Latin Benedictine Order during much of the Lusignan (1192 to 1489) period in Cyprus. Early monastery records have not survived, but we know that the Latin monastery also flourished under the Latin Benedictine Order during much of the Lusignan (1192 to 1489) period in Cyprus. Under the Ottomans, the monastery was unoccupied until the 17th century, when it passed into the hands of Greek monks who re-erected it on the original site.

This period ended in 1426, when the Mamelukes sacked and destroyed the monastery, casting off the cross (which was by then encased in gold). All Benedictine relics were burned, and if it uncertain who succeeded them. The buildings were, however, repaired; only to be burnt down again by the invading Ottomans, who ended the Venetian period of rule in 1571. After the Ottoman period, the monastery was unoccupied until the 17th century, when it passed into the hands of Greek monks who re-erected it on the original site.

Stavrovouni was once again abandoned after the signing of the 1821, until a Cypriot, Dionysios Christides, settled there with four other monks in 1840. Their means of subsistence were very limited, however, and they were forced to leave.

In 1883, a fire destroyed all perishable materials in the monastery except the Cross that had replaced the Cross of the Penitent Thief. Christides returned the following year, refurbishing the monastery and becoming its first modern abbot.

Today, a small community of monks remains at the monastery, following the strict rules of the Basilian Order of Mount Athos in northeastern Greece. Their days are spent in prayer and study, physical labour, and rest, which includes time for their children to visit during the summer months. The monks, who follow the strict rules of the monastery, are not permitted to visit the outside world or to be disturbed by visitors.

The Blue Beret - April 2003

Located high on a mountain once known as Olympus, Stavrovouni Monastery is one of the island’s most important religious sites. Visible for miles, from the A1 motorway to the southeast of Nicosia, the Monastery dominates the skyline – a long building rising from a craggy mountain top 688 metres above sea level. Tradition has it that this is the site of the oldest religious community on the island: this month, The Blue Beret explores its significance as we continue our series on the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus.

The Blue Beret - April 2003
Fate ReUNites Old Comrades in Cyprus

A series of remarkable twists of fate brought together two old Comrades in Arms who had served in Cyprus, after almost 50 years. Both men had served with the Royal South Staffordshire Regiment in Cyprus between 1954 and 1958 and had decided to pay their respects to comrades who had died during that turbulent period on the island and are buried at Wayne’s Keep cemetery. The cemetery, situated within Sector Two West of the buffer zone, is currently looked after by personnel from 25/170 (IMJN) Bty RA of 47 Regt RA.

Mr. Anthony Corbet had served with the Royal South Staffordshire Regiment in Cyprus from 1955 to 1958. Recently, while holidaying in Cyprus with his wife, he decided to pay his respects to his fallen comrades and visit “Wayne’s Keep”. Having contacted John Brydon, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission representative in Cyprus, and the 2SW representative, he proceeded to tour the cemetery under the guidance of Sgt. Roberts. He recalled in particular attending the funeral of a colleague, Pte. Banks, killed in a bomb blast on 21 May 1956. After signing the visitors book in the Wayne’s Keep Memorial Room, at nearby UN OP 51, Mr. Corbet left to continue his holiday.

Some 30 minutes later, Sgt. Roberts found himself pressed into service again. This time, at short notice, he was escorting Mr. Ted Badger of the South Staffs, who had served in Cyprus from 1954 to 1957. Mr. Badger, also holidaying in Cyprus with his wife, had decided to pay his respects to his fallen comrades from that time. Mr. Badger was killed by a shell in 1956 and died at the scene. Pte. Banks had subsequently attended the funeral, a photograph of which is among those on display on the wall in the Wayne’s Keep Memorial Room at UN OP 51. (Anthony Corbet is to be seen on the same photograph.)

It was with mounting disbelief that Sgt. Roberts pointed out the coincidence of visitors. He was even happier to help these two comrades who had not seen one another in 46 years to get together. Their holiday hotels were only a few miles apart.

Fate can be a wonderful thing!

Other comrades remembered from the South Staffs were:

Pte. WH Asprey 09/04/56
Pte. K Hewitt 01/04/56
Pte. WA Ingram 21/10/55

Sector Red Nose Day

Soldiers in Sector 2 donned red noses on 15 March in a day of fun and games all in the name of raising money for charity. Red Nose Day is an annual charity event in UK that raises, literally, millions of pounds for charity.

The indomitable Cpl. Kirstine Ginger, who managed to raise everybody’s interest in the event, spearheaded all our efforts. Through the help of her mother in UK she managed to persuade the Sun newspaper to fly out to Cyprus and present Sector 2 with 300 red noses, absolutely essential for the day!

Cpl. Ginger and her helpers approached various companies in search of raffle prizes, and with their kind donations, many attractive prizes were collected.

The evening consisted of a plethora of “funny games” with teams from each Troop location in Sector 2 AOR participating. A “Soak the Senior” stand, where anybody could throw wet sponges at senior personalities from Sector 2, was a big hit in every sense of the word! A karaoke competition was also held and of course there was the prize raffle.

About 150 members of Sector 2 took part, from the Commanding Officer down to the youngest gunner, and the evening was a fantastic success. A total of £600 was raised for the Red Nose appeal, while great fun was had by all!

Sector 1’s Historic Uniforms

By Sgt. Maj. Miguel Angel Gonzalez

Medal parades in Sector 1 where the Argentinian Contingent is based are always an impressive affair, but it is the flamboyant uniforms from the various units of the Argentinean army that steal the show. These uniforms are reserved for ceremonial occasions such as medal parades.

Patricios (Patricios)

The Patricios, one of the most famous regiments of the Argentinean Army’s Infantry was created in 1806. The history of this infantry unit dates back to the early stages of the formation of the Argentinean nation. It has since been involved in all the campaigns for national emancipation. Having fought in many battles, it has received numerous titles and decorations of recognition.

At the time of its creation, the Patricians used the distinguishing characteristic of a red badge with the insignia Buenos Aires trimmed with palms and embroidered laurel that has adorned the left arm of the jacket ever since. The Patrician uniform was first used during the English invasion. It features a round hat made of suede, with a triangular brim, red button and celestial and white feather as emblem of the unit. The short blue jacket is trimmed with red collar, cuffs and sash. White pants and black boots complete the picture. The Patricians carried a rifle, a bayonet and musket. Another distinguishing feature of the unit was that the soldiers tied their long hair into a ponytail at the nape of the neck.

An ordinance signed by President Dr. Figueroa Alcorta on 13 June 1910 gave the name “Regimiento de Patricios” to the First Infantry line, granting it the right to use the uniform of 1810 as its traditional military outfit.

The Regiment of Mounted Grenadiers (Regimiento de Granaderos a Caballo)

The “Regiment of Grenadiers on Horse”, or “Mounted Grenadiers” as they were initially known, is one of the most well-known cavalry units of South America. This regiment was formed by Lt. Col. D. José de San Martín, on 16 March 1812 and travelled throughout South America fighting in numerous battles in the independence struggles of countries such as Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia.

The unit was dissolved in 1824, after the battle of Ayacucho. Of the 125 men that had set out from the barracks at Retiro, in 1815 to join the “Army of the Andes” that was formed in the Province of Mendoza, only seven returned after 11 years of campaigns and battles.

The uniform illustrated in the picture is in tuxedo style, with a cape and flat-topped helmet in blue. The collar and epaulettes were a deep red while a white vest was worn underneath. The helmet had an emblem on the front with the insignia “freedom and glory” and was held up by a knotted cord tied under the chin. High boots with spurs were also worn. To further distinguish the troop San Martín had them wear a couple of metal hoops in the ear making them identifiable if they deserted the front line of battle – this idea was later adopted by certain officers as an example of loyalty to the army. The Grenadiers carried a hooked sabre and occasionally a lance.

Infernales de Güemes (Infernals of Güemes)

The legendary “Regiment of Infernals” was established by Martín Miguel de Güemes in 1815, in order to contain the Spanish invasion that was approaching through the North. This unit, named in opposition to a Spanish regiment called “Angels”, was made up of specially selected men who were well trained in guerrilla warfare.

The Infernals carried out what was called the “gaucha war”, an irregular kind of warfare seen by military experts as a model. The uniform of the Infernals featured a red jacket, cape and cap with a red pompon on the end, white pants, pony boots with spurs and a bandoleer belt. The Infernals were well-trained mules in many of their attacks as well as irregular combat methods and diversionary tactics.
Water Wars: A Real Possibility

It has become an almost unchallenged assumption that the 21st century faces water wars as communities and countries become increasingly thirsty, increasingly desperate for the world’s most precious and most fundamental natural resource.

Alarming statistics and forecasts of the impending calamity proliferate.

A third of the world lives in water-stressed areas, where consumption outstrips supply. By 2025, two-thirds of people will be trapped in this appalling plight, if current trends continue unchecked.

A fifth of the world’s population is without access to safe water supplies. Some 6,000 people—mainly children and mainly in developing countries—die every day as a result of dirty, contaminated water. Annually, that is an equivalent of the entire population of central Paris being wiped out.

Sewage pollution of rivers and seas has precipitated a health crisis of massive proportions. The eating of contaminated shellfish causes an estimated 2.5 million cases of infectious hepatitis annually, resulting in 25,000 deaths and a further 25,000 people suffering long-term disabilities. Escherichia coli, now found even in the Rhine, cost more than $50 billion a year in Europe alone.

Around half of the world’s rivers are seriously depleted and polluted. Some of the globe’s most important wetlands and inland waters, including the Aral Sea and the Marshlands of Mesopotamia, have shrunk, triggering environmental calamities for people and wildlife and the fisheries upon which they mutually depend.

Two billion people, around one-third of the world’s population, depend on groundwater supplies. In parts of India, China, West Asia, including the Arabian Peninsula, the former Soviet Union and the western United States, groundwater levels are falling at a rate of over-destruction. Groundwater in Western Europe and the United States is also becoming increasingly polluted by chemicals used in agriculture.

Yet no wonder that few could be forgiven for concluding that the Earth’s glass is half empty, rather than half full. That inter-communal, international, conflict, and disputes over water resources will inevitably occur as the population swells to billions and water availability becomes increasingly uncertain. But, if history is our guide, then we have quiet optimism for hope that we can steer the world’s water policy away from the rocks of inevitability.

Research, to be presented at the 3rd World Water Forum taking place in Kyoto, Japan, this month, and to coincide with World Water Day, has analysed the history of freshwater agreements stretching back 4,500 years.

It indicates that cooperation rather than conflict has been the norm over recent centuries in terms of managing rivers and their catchment areas. Indeed the work shows that, when push comes to shove, nations and communities more often than not take the path of peace and share rather than hoard water resources, whether it be for drinking water supplies, wildlife protection or more recently hydro-power.

There are other signs of hope. Up until the middle of the last century, many of the rivers on continents like North America and Europe and especially those running through big industrial areas were so polluted they were classified as “dead.”. Some were so polluted that the water could be used as ink, and noxious gases, bubbling up from their depths, could be ignited by a match.

Today, after billions of dollars of investment in water treatment works and agreements with industry on effluents, fish are again spawning and migrating to their upper reaches through these now relatively clean estuaries and tributaries.

The Thames in Britain was officially declared a dead river half a century ago, save for a few mud worms. Today, some 120 species including migrating salmon can be found in its waters.

Improvements are also being seen in the developing world, contrary to popular belief. In the South Asian region, for example, access to improved sanitation systems between 1990 and 2000 has benefitted some 220 million people. Unfortunately, the population growth, meaning that over 800 million still do not have the safe and healthy systems they deserve.

But it shows that, given political will, diplomacy and investment, real changes can be made; real hope can replace helplessness.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg has given the world the blueprint for how sustainable development, development that lasts, development that respects people and the planet, can be achieved.

We do not need any more declarations. What is needed now is action to implement WSSD’s Plan of Implementation and the myriad of voluntary, partnerships, between industry, non-governmental organisations, governments and the United Nations.

Many of these concern water and the goal of halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015, a target that is closely linked to improving the living conditions of the poor who are without adequate shelter or basic services in slums and other settlements.

World Water Day is a focus for this action and the Forum a pump for turning the tides of Johannesburg from a trickle to a torrent of activity. 2003 is also the International Year of Freshwater. It must play its part in maintaining momentum.

A great deal of goodwill, of imagination and resolve is needed. We do not want the forecasts of disaster, the prophets of doom, to be proved right. So we also need funds to build up the infrastructure needed for cleaner, healthier and more abundant supplies of water.

So the pledges and promises made in Monterrey, Mexico, last year at the Finance for Development conference, if anything, must be met.

Too much water is being wasted. That over 50 per cent of water in some African cities is lost in leaks, dripping pipes or is degraded.

Agriculture, where 70 per cent of water is wasted, is wasteful. Drip technologies or underground pipes are cheap and simple. Let’s make them more widely available.

We must give water value, both spiritual and economic. This cannot, however, be at the expense of the urban poor who already pay a high price for this resource. So we must be creative in the use of water where it is essential to offer inexpensive, water-saving, alternatives for farmers, industry, cities and consumers.

History may teach us that cooperation over freshwater resources, such as rivers, is the norm. It also teaches us that complacency is not an option. There are over 150 river basins where there are inadequate cooperative agreements.

Many of these could become potential flash points. So another urgent need is for international organisations to apply the lessons of the past, for the benefit of the present and future parties.

To act as the result of the World Conference in 1992, marriage guidance counselors, amicably resolving differences between countries and communities who may be straying apart, or acting as go-between for those who are flirting with cooperation but are too coy, too unsure, about how to proceed.

We have, at the beginning of the new century, all the intellectual, financial and technological resources we need to overcome the current and future water crises.

Like the water, we all prize so much, let’s not waste it.

Nitin Desai, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Mark Malloch Brown, UN Development Programme
Klaus Toepfer, UN Environment Programme
Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO
Anna Tibajuka, UN-Habitat
Carol Bellamy, UNICEF
Hani van Ginkel, UN University

World Water Day was 22 March
Reach Out from Mount Olympus to Kilimanjaro

UNFICYP peacekeeper Dermot Higgins serving with UNICRON is one of the founder members of a charitable organisation run on a voluntary basis by members of the Irish Defence Forces and friends.

His activities for the organisation have included leading groups on five trips to Kilimanjaro in Kenya to raise funds for various projects sponsored by Childaid and he says he would be willing to organise and lead a trip from Cyprus if there is sufficient interest.

Established in 2001 and granted charitable status in 2002, Childaid was born as a result of what some of the founder members experienced while serving with UN missions in places like Somalia, Rwanda, Lebanon, Cyprus, Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor. CS (W02) Dermot Higgins, who works as Training NCO, DBM and UNICRON Administration NCO in Ops Branch UNFICYP HQ says:

“I love Africa very close to the hearts of military and international staff, regardless of where they are from or where they are posted. “When one sees the devastating effect that war and poverty have on the kids it makes your heart warm to them even more.”

Initially, those who were to become the founders of Childaid started raising money to fund a street rehabilitation and preparation for further education. The drop-in-centre also provides a craft education programme for teenagers, which is a source of income for them. Children’s orphanages in Uganda, Nepal and Lebanon and a children’s hospital in Tanzania, which deals with sight disorders have also received sponsorship from Childaid.

Recently, Dermot took some of his leave and travelled to South Lebanon from Cyprus to give the Tbinb Orphanage funds for the refurbishment of the children’s sleeping accommodation which gets damp from the rain that soaks in through the roof and walls. (They are still short of about C£2,300 to complete the project, should anyone like to help.) In January, Dermot travelled to Nairobi for the signing of the contract to complete the school in Mukuru slums and to visit some street children’s projects. The School is due to be completed in November 2003 and is going to be renamed “The John Lucey Memorial School” after one of Childaid’s founding members who tragically lost his life while hill walking in Ireland when training for a Kilimanjaro trip.

Raising funds remains the primary challenge for volunteer organisations and Childaid is no different. People can get charity donor burn-out when there are so many organisations and so many worthwhile causes. A lot of people now want something in return including some hands-on pay for their money.

Childaid gives people the opportunity of a lifetime to trek to the top of Kilimanjaro or to the Everest Base Camp. They can see where their money is being spent and also know that they have contributed directly to the welfare of at least a few kids from the millions needing assistance. They at this step at getting out of the cycle of disease, malnutrition, illiteracy, drug abuse, prostitution etc is all that some of these kids need to go on and lead a life that has some form of humanity to it.

For information contact Dermot at:
Tel: 22-86-4581
E-mail: UNFICYP-sb-rep-data-base-manager@un.org
Dermothhiggins@hotmail.com

Dermot last January in another classroom awaiting renovation .... and after

International Women’s Day 2003

On 10 April, UNFICYP commemorated International Women’s Day with a special bicultural event at the former Ledra Palace Hotel. Bringing together approximately 100 Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot women, the gathering involved people from many different professional and social backgrounds, including teachers, lawyers, judges, physicians, artists and administrators.

Madame Garlick, from the Civil Affairs Branch, read out to the group the Secretary-General’s official Women’s Day statement, and invited the participants to reflect on the significance of his words for women in Cyprus. The statement, available on the internet at http://www.un.org/events/women/iov/2003/sgmessage.html, focussed on the Millennium Development Goals, first identified and endorsed by all member states during the Millennium Summit in 2000. Those goals identify the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as a key priority. In addition, they refer to the need to work to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, reduce child mortality and improve maternal health, all of which involve a special role for women in the developing world.

The Secretary-General’s message emphasised the importance of “making sure that women and girls have all the skills, services and self-confidence they need to protect themselves” and to help women to “take greater control of their lives, financially as well as physically.”

The Ledra Palace participants agreed that these aims have a particular resonance for Cyprus, where women live in conditions better than in many other countries, but where the needs for empowerment and for development of women’s potentials remain great. The patriarchal nature of society on both sides continues to pose a problem for many, as well as the stereotypes that successful women encounter in professional and social life.

The evening also involved a special presentation by a bicultural group working on the concept of what it means to be a successful woman in Cyprus. The group, which has operated for almost two years, involves around 20 women who are working to promote self-confidence, skill development and empowerment among young women in particular in both north and south. Because of the difficulties associated with crossing the buffer zone, most of their meetings take place either in Pyla or separately for the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, with contact and follow-up by email. The 10 April gathering provided a relatively rare opportunity for them to meet in person.

Of course, men were also included in the night! The gathering was graced by the Force Commander’s presence, as well as a number of men involved in NGO activity on both sides and internationally.

Through this event, UNFICYP provided an opportunity for a gathering of bicultural women to come together and extend their networks and ideas to others. By this means, it is hoped that they will also draw strength and inspiration to work for the UN’s objectives for women worldwide.

Geoff Hazel - Museum Piece

Commander Geoff Hazel, Deputy Commander UNICYPOL, served with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, from June to September 1999. That was when the UN organized the popular consultation and the people of East Timor voted to travel on down the road to independence rather than opt for closer ties with Indonesia. There was widespread violence at the time and many Timorese died, including a number of local staff members. Geoff was posted in the volatile area of Ermera, where militia did all their bully-boy power to intimidate and inhibit the democratic process.

In fact, Geoff was wounded when he and UNAMET colleagues came under fire as they sought (successfully) to get the ballot boxes safe and intact to the central counting station in the capital Dili. Geoff was subsequently decorated for his actions. Now he has been asked to submit an oral history on video tape of his experience for display at the Australian National Museum in Canberra. Photo shows UNAMET East Timor veterans Geoff Hazel and Brian Kelly tapping the interview for the museum.

Merage Kapahi(left) and Brian Merton(right) of the George Washington University bicultural women’s group, with Madeline Garlick at the UNFICYP women’s day gathering at Ledra Palace.

14 April 2003 - The Blue Beret

East Timor veterans Geoff Hazel and Brian Kelly look back
Main Events: June 1999-April 2003

1999

22 Jun: Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/1999/707)
1 Nov: Appointment of Alvaro de Soto as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus
3-13 Dec: First session of proximity talks, New York, with Glafcos Clerides, the Greek Cypriot leader, and Rauf Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot leader
10 Dec: Helsinki European Council

2000

31 Jan-8 Feb: Second session of proximity talks, Geneva
5-12 Jul: Third session of proximity talks, Geneva
24 Jul-4 Aug: Continuation of third session of proximity talks, Geneva
9-26 Sep: Fourth session of proximity talks, New York
12 Sep: Statement by the Secretary-General to the parties
1-8 Nov: Fifth session of proximity talks, Geneva
8 Nov: Secretary-General’s oral remarks to the parties; Mr. Denktash declines invitation to participate in further proximity talks

2001

14 May: Secretary-General addresses a gathering of European Union Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Brussels
28 Aug: Secretary-General meets Mr. Denktash in Salzburg
5 Sep: Secretary-General invites leaders to new and reinvigorated phase of talks; Mr. Clerides accepts; Mr. Denktash declines
Nov: Exchange of letters between Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash leads to agreement to meet face-to-face in the presence of a United Nations representative
4 Dec: Meeting between Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash, United Nations Protected Area, Nicosia, in the presence of the Special Adviser results in agreement to begin direct talks
5 Dec: Mr. Clerides dines at the residence of Mr. Denktash, north Nicosia
29 Dec: Mr. Denktash dines at the residence of Mr. Clerides, south Nicosia

2002

14 Jan: Office of the Special Adviser opens in Cyprus
16 Jan: Direct talks begin, United Nations Protected Area, Nicosia
14-16 May: Secretary-General visits Cyprus
6 Sep: Secretary-General meets the leaders in Paris
3-4 Oct: Secretary-General meets the leaders in New York; leaders agree to create technical committees
7 Oct: Mr. Denktash undergoes surgery in New York; direct talks do not resume until January 2003
11 Nov: Secretary-General tables his proposed Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem
18 Nov: Mr. Clerides agrees to negotiate on the Secretary-General’s plan
27 Nov: Mr. Denktash agrees to negotiate on the Secretary-General’s plan
7 Dec: Mr. Denktash returns from New York to Cyprus
10 Dec: Secretary-General tables a revised Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem
12-13 Dec: Copenhagen European Council

2003

7 Jan: Technical committees begin meeting
15 Jan: Direct talks resume
16 Feb: Tassos Papadopoulos is elected to succeed Mr. Clerides
23-25 Feb: Secretary-General visits Turkey and Greece
26 Feb: Secretary-General arrives in Cyprus and formally tables his further revised Basis for a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem
28 Feb: Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Denktash accept the Secretary-General’s invitation to meet in The Hague
10 Mar: Secretary-General meets with Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Denktash in The Hague, along with representatives of the guarantors
11 Mar: Secretary-General announces in The Hague that the process has concluded but that his plan remains on the table
16 Apr: Office in Cyprus of the Special Adviser closes