

The Blue Beret

September 2004



**Slovak President of the
National Council's Visit**



THE BLUE BERET

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GENDER JUSTICE

Opening the "Peace Needs Women, and Women Need Justice" conference on gender justice in post-conflict situations earlier this month in New York, Deputy SG Louise Fréchette spoke of why ensuring justice for women is so vital to underpinning the rule of law and consolidating peace.

"We know from our experience of modern conflict that women and girls suffer its impact increasingly and disproportionately. They are usually neither the initiators of conflict nor the wagers of war, and yet they are specifically targeted, often as a way to humiliate the adversary and break the morale and resistance of whole societies.

"Steps to end this culture of impunity had been taken at the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, the Sierra Leone Special Court, and through the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court," she said, "but we must build further on that work.

"Four years ago, the Security Council made clear in its landmark resolution 1325 that we must address the issue of women, peace and security on several fronts. We must strive to integrate women's concerns more effectively in peace processes worldwide, and achieve their full, equal and effective participation in those processes."

Resolution 1325 also called for "special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse".

The Deputy SG pointed out how on the ground, the human rights sections of UN peacekeeping missions worldwide investigate the use of gender-based violence as a tool of war against women and girls.

As the SG stated in his recent report on the rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict societies, the UN system needs to review best practices and develop proposals for more tools and mechanisms to promote gender justice, involving justice sector institutions, civil society, donors and the UN.

Clearly, much has been achieved. But there is still a long way to go if we are to promote successfully the concept that "peace needs women, and women need justice".

Editorial

Number of Peacekeeping Missions on the Rise – SG

The number and scope of UN peace operations are approaching what may become their highest levels ever, improving prospects for conflict resolution, but also stretching thin the capacities of the system, Secretary-General Kofi Annan reported to the General Assembly on 7 September 2004.

"The increased demand for United Nations peace operations that has arisen in 2004 represents a challenge not seen since the rapid increases in the scale and complexity of operations in the 1990s", the Secretary-General says, in his annual report on implementation of the year 2000 Millennium Declaration.

The United Nations, which has bolstered its support to peacekeeping from its headquarters, is administering 17 operations, including those in complex and fragile political environments such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Georgia and Kosovo. United Nations forces are now withdrawing from a stable Sierra Leone, where they have helped the Government to consolidate peace. The United Nations is also downsizing according to plan in Timor-Leste, after UN peacekeepers contributed to that country's independence.

New operations were authorized over the past year in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti and Burundi. The United Nations is seeking to double its troop strength in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ensure that tentative progress towards stability is not reversed. At the request of the Security Council or in anticipation of upcoming operational demands, it has also been planning for substantial new or expanded operations in Iraq and the Sudan.

The Secretary-General projects that more than 30,000 uniformed personnel may be required to meet the surge in demand for peacekeeping operations in addition to some 50,000 currently deployed. This could mean more troops and civilian police would be serving as blue helmets than during UN peacekeeping's peak in 1993, when 78,000 uniformed personnel served, according to the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Commitments Prerequisite for Expansion

While welcoming the increased demand for UN missions as a signal of new opportunities for peace, the Secretary-General warns that commitments of political, financial, material and human resources are necessary, and that a clear exit strategy is vital for each operation.

The United Nations is seeking support for peacekeeping from developing and developed countries alike, the Secretary-General stressed. While it may be possible to find troops, he noted critical gaps in specialized military capabilities, such as tactical air support and field medical facilities, as well as a dearth of francophone police and a pending depletion of strategic reserve stocks for peacekeeping.

The Secretary-General also pointed to the need for steady, ongoing work with local institutions to promote sustainable economic development and good governance and to consolidate the rule of law.

"Respect for the rule of law brings together several key goals of the Millennium Declaration and is a core activity of the Organisation's efforts in the field, especially in post-conflict societies", the Secretary-General says in his report, an annual assessment of follow-up on the goals



agreed at the September 2000 Millennium Summit in New York.

UN activities in this area cited by the Secretary-General include tribunals to address past war crimes, technical assistance to justice institutions and facilitation of national consultations on justice reform.

The global response to drugs and cross-border crime has been bolstered, the Secretary-General's report says, by the coming into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in September 2003, and its ratification by 82 States, as well as by the adoption and opening for signature of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in December 2003 in Mérida, México.

Organised crime today is taking on the aspect of complex business conglomerates, while hierarchical structures such as "families" and cartels are disappearing, according to the report. A diversification of criminal pursuits, as well as decentralized structures, are posing difficulties for law enforcement, and criminal networks are taking advantage of civil conflicts and political instability, as well as opportunities to service terrorist organisations.

The frequency of natural disasters, and their impact on the poor and vulnerable, appears to be increasing, the report says. In 2003 alone, 75,000 people lost their lives in 700 natural occurrences, including the Bam and Algerian earthquakes. Six hundred million people were affected, and combined economic losses are estimated to exceed \$65 billion. A number of trends, including rising sea levels, more widely varying extremes in temperature and rainfall and changes in agricultural production patterns, suggest continued dangers.

Fortunately, the international community is applying new strategies for disaster prevention and mitigation of risk. Widespread flooding in South Asia in July, although severe, was less destructive than previous floods due to local preparedness and response capacities. Addressing the structural obstacles to food security in the Horn of Africa has averted a major famine from the drought cycle that began in 2002.

The annual report from the Secretary-General also includes an assessment of mixed progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (*see www.un.org/millenniumgoals*).

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Front Cover: Slovak President of the
National Council's Visit

Back Cover: Driving Skills Competition



Slovak President of the National Council Visits UNFICYP



The Slovak President of the National Council, H.E. Pavol Hrušovský, and a 20-member delegation paid an official visit to Cyprus from 16-18 September 2004. During his stay, Mr. Hrušovský visited UNFICYP, inspecting a welcoming Guard of Honour on his arrival at Headquarters on 16 September 2004. He was greeted



by Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mr. Zbigniew Włosowicz, Chief of Mission, who later escorted the Slovak delegation to the Old Nicosia Airport (above left). The next day, Mr. Hrušovský paid a visit to the UNFICYP Slovak camp in Pyla (above).

Mess's Mass Mug-Out



14 members of the International Mess were "mugged out" on 24 September, and Maj. Mick Bottomley a few days earlier. Although all look (reasonably) happy at the prospect of returning home, they were all sad to leave the UNFICYP family. For many reasons of performance, professionalism and personality, they will not be easily forgotten!

Lt. Diego Cordoba, Capt. Stanislav Pigula, Maj. Zsolt Antal Kiss, Capt. Matias Mones Ruiz, Lt. Col. Hans Tomaschitz, Maj. József Kovács, Maj. Jeff Welstead, Capt. Norbert Tajti, Maj. Ludovik Gállik, Lt. Col. Marcelo Roberto Feliciani, Maj. Mick Bottomley, Capt. Raimo Pänkäläinen, Capt. Agustin Garcia, Lt. Paddy Williams, Capt. James Southall

Slovaks in Dherinia

By 1/Lt. Zoltán Kömives

Located in Dherinia is Sector 4's 2nd Platoon, which controls the buffer zone area from Ayios Nikolaos Church (at the far east of the Sovereign Base Area) to the easternmost part of the island where UN OP-146, or "Baywatch" as it is known inside UNFICYP, is located. This area of responsibility includes the ghost town of Varosha, where two of the Platoon's five OPs are placed.

The headquarters of 2nd Platoon is at OP-142. At this OP, as well as "Baywatch", Slovak soldiers stand guard 24 hours a day to observe the buffer zone. Baywatch is of particular concern in the summer, since it is the vantage point from which a watch is kept over the Maritime Security Line (MSL), the buffer zone extension line stretching three kilometres out into the sea. Violations are a regular feature in the summer season when vessels frequently cross the MSL. The main offenders are fishing boats, always casting their nets in search of a "better catch". The Slovak soldiers address the situation by using a megaphone or siren to warn the offenders to return to their side of the MSL.

Besides the regular Baywatch duties, soldiers at this post are part of the Force Reserve platoon which deals with demonstrations and any violations committed during the hunting season. With temperatures often reaching 45°C in the summer months, it is a real luxury for the soldiers to refresh and relax in the same enticing waters during off-duty hours.

Near the platoon is an UNCIVPOL station staffed by civilian police from Australia, India and Ireland. The Slovak soldiers have an excellent relationship with their colleagues here. Reports are filed to the police officers on issues linked to civilians who commit offences within the buffer zone. In addition, UNCIVPOL assists platoon members in escorting civilian offenders out of their area of control.

Living and working so close together, a good relationship has developed between the soldiers and police officers. Free time is often spent together, particularly in sporting activities. It is also an excellent opportunity for platoon members to improve on their command of the English language!

Most Slovaks join UNFICYP for the chance to travel and gain experience in a multi-national environment. We have certainly not been disappointed!



*Standing, from the left: SSgt. Juraj Štelbacký, Cpl. Jozef Horváth, Pte. Ladislav Šeštnák, 1/Lt. Peter Sudimák, 1/Lt. Zoltán Kömives, Cpl. Vít Macho, MCpl. Ladislav Lehocký
Kneeling, from the left: MCpl. Maroš Palko, Pte. Roman Myšák, Cpl. Miloš Husár, Pte. Daniel Bálint, Pte. Marek Staněik*



From the left: 1/Lt. Zoltán Kömives, 1/Lt. Peter Sudimák, Sgt. Luke Banwell and Insp. Premjit Kotani



MCpl. Marek Adaměik and 1/Lt. Zoltán Kömives



Sector 2 – March Past



Sector 2 – The Waterloo Band of the King's Division



Sector 1 – Parade inspection by the CM, FC and CO Sector 1

Medal Parades Sectors 1, 2 and 4

Three Medal Parades have taken place since the last issue. Hundreds of UNFICYP peacekeepers were decorated with the United Nations medal.

The first, Sector 4, took place in the spectacular surrounds of the ancient amphitheatre at Salamis, not far from Famagusta, on 27 August. As the sun set, Slovak and Hungarian peacekeepers formed up in the amphitheatre, ready to receive their decorations from the Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Hebert Figoli, CO Sector 4, Lt. Col. Martin Baëko, the Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary H.E. János Kisfalvi, the Ambassador of the Slovak Republic H.E. Dr. Ján Varšo, and other civilian and military authorities.

A warm reception for all medal recipients and guests followed at a local tavern, lasting well into the following morning.

A week later, on 2 September, it was Sector 1's turn. Soldiers from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay assembled at San Martín Camp for the presentation of the United Nations medal. UN Flight and contingent members from the MFR and FMPU were also honoured.

Chief of Mission, Mr. Zbigniew Wlosowicz, Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Hebert Figoli, the Irish Ambassador to Cyprus, Mr. John Swift, the Cuban Ambassador to Cyprus, Mr. Pablo Rodriguez Vidal, the British Deputy High Commissioner, Mr. Phillip Barton, Military Attachés, as well as civilian and military UNFICYP and local authorities, families and friends, turned out for the occasion. Medals were presented by the Chief of Mission, the Force Commander and senior civilian and military officials.

Following speeches by Lt. Col. Gustavo Jorge Luis Motta, the Force Commander and the Chief of Mission, the band played a selection of military airs before the troops, followed by the band, marched off.

The reception that followed was notable, as ever, for that special Latin flair – a wonderful array of South American food, including a unique display of flag-cake confectionary and, of course, a stirring display of Argentinian dances.

On 16 September, Sector 2 put its best foot forward with a precision display at its medal parade at the Ledra Palace. Some 95 members of 40th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Lowland Gunners) were presented with their UN medals by the Chief of Mission, the Force Commander and the British High Commissioner, Mr. Lynn Parker. The Waterloo Band of the King's Division provided the music for the parade and the ensuing Sunset Ceremony, whilst the Regiment's own Pipes and Drums led the marching troops off the parade square. The bands combined to entertain the spectators with a moving rendition of "Highland Cathedral".

After the parade, guests were invited to a reception hosted by the Commander of the British Contingent, Col. Ian Sinclair, in the Ledra grounds. A quartet from the Waterloo Band provided entertainment during the evening, and the reception culminated with more pipe music and a fireworks display.



Sector 1 – unique display of flag-cake confectionary



Sector 4 – Soldiers from Hungary and Slovakia await their medal presentation



Sector 4 – FC addresses medal recipients and guests in the Salamis amphitheatre



Sector 1 – traditional Argentinian dances

The Cultural Heritage of Cyprus — Part XXVI

Asinou — World Heritage Gem

Considered to feature some of the island's most exquisite Byzantine art, the church of Panagia Phorbiotissa (Virgin Mary of the Pastures) is one of the Troodos churches recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Located at Asinou on a piece of land that looks much like a one-sided plateau, 450 metres above sea level and surrounded by the pine-clad foothills of the Troodos mountain range, Asinou is five kilometres south of the village of Nikitari.



Christ Pantocrator (1332/3): narthex



St. George (Beginning of the 13th century): narthex

According to an inscription inside the church, this humble building was erected by a courtier of the Byzantine Empire, Magister (judge) Nikiforos Ischyrios, on his estate at Asinou upon the death of his wife Gefyra in December 1099. A few years later, Nikiforos built the Monastery of the Forves (pastures) and this church became a “katholikos” (monastery church) and acquired the name “Phorbiotissa”. Afterwards, the Magister wore the habit of a monk, took the name of Nikolaos and eventually became the first abbot of the monastery he had founded.

The name Asinou comes from Asine, a city founded in the 11th century B.C. by emigrants from the city of Asine in Argolis, Greece. Asinou disappeared some time in the middle ages. The monastery, however, was in use well after the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1570/1, until the 17th century.

The Church

The original church was built with roughly hewn stone blocks and mud mortar (instead of the stronger customary lime mortar – a fact that caused a partial collapse in the apse). Its design includes a rectangular nave with a central and a western bay and a sanctuary, or holy of holies, ending in an apse in the east. The roof of the nave forms a flattened barrel vault, while that of the sanctuary is a semi-dome.

An “iconostasis” (a screen that usually bears many icons) separates the nave from the sanctuary. Communication between the two areas is through a central pair of gilt, carved and painted “royal doors” and by another smaller side door to the north of these doors. The sanctuary is reserved for clergy celebrating the liturgy or mass.

Towards the end of the 12th century, the church acquired an additional chamber to the west, a “narthex”, with a central dome and a semi-domed apse in the south and north sides. The narthex was constructed with well-hewn yellow sandstone blocks and was a much stronger building.

The entire building was later covered by a second, steep-pitched wooden roof with flat tiles to protect it from rain and snow, with additional walls erected to support the roof. Earthquakes necessitated the reinforcement of the building with both external and internal buttresses.

The building has four external doors: the main entrance is in the south wall of the central bay (as is the norm with Orthodox churches). There was originally a southern entrance to the narthex, but that was blocked to provide the surface for the large fresco of St. George that was dedicated by Nikiforos Kallias, tamer of horses (12th-13th century).

All doors apart from the one in the north apse of the narthex have arched tympana constructed with bricks and filled with glazed gypsum frames. The greenish glass of some of these tympana is believed to be from the mediaeval era. Light in the apse of the sanctuary is provided through three narrow-lobed windows constructed with the same materials as the tympana.

The Frescoes

The term “Byzantine” describes anything pertaining to the Eastern Roman Empire that Constantine the Great established when he erected his new capital, Constantinople, on the site of the ancient Greek city of Byzantium in 330 A.D. Byzantine art expresses the spiritual conception of the church as a microcosm of the universe, with the painted icons and frescoes depicting the universal faith of Christianity. Figures are represented in a symbolic and stylized manner, rather than a three-dimensional style.

Once the church was built, Magister Nikiforos proceeded with its decoration in 1105/6. The earth of Cyprus provided the colours used for the paintings: white from lime; black from carbon; and red, green, yellow, amber and blue from salts of iron or copper. Some paintings also have remnants of decoration with gold leaf. The very high quality of the frescoes of this first period suggests that they were probably the work of those artists who were sent from Constantinople by Emperor Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118) to decorate the Monastery of the Virgin Mary at Kykkos.

Unfortunately, the partial collapse of the apse and the central bay of the nave resulted in the destruction of about a third of the original paintings. The narthex – which was built some 100 years later at the end of the 12th century with better materials – does not seem to have suffered any damage.

The entire western bay of the nave, parts of the sanctuary and some tiny spaces elsewhere in the central bay are covered with frescoes of the period

1105/6. In some cases, the partially destroyed frescoes of the first period were repainted over in the same manner, such as the Donor fresco over the window arch of the nave's south entrance, where Magister Nikiforos is shown offering the church to Christ in the presence of His Mother and angels. The small figure behind Nikiforos is his wife Gefyra.

In the sanctuary, the Communion of the Apostles is found above the three-lobed windows of the apse. This impressive fresco bears mellow colours that exude an air of sophistication and intense spirituality. Below this are the six Fathers of saints, in the middle of whom are the two very important Cypriot saints, Barnabas and Eftychios.

The fresco of the Birth of the Virgin Mary is located on the wall of the north recess, while the Presentation of the Virgin to the Temple lies on the opposite recess. The recently discovered Ascension of Christ covers the north and south halves of the sanctuary vault. The impressive “Mother of God, flanked by the Archangels Michael and Gabriel” that dominates the apse's semi-dome is of a later period (1200-1300) and does not share the same quality as the previously mentioned paintings.

Additional 1105/6 paintings are found in the nave's western bay: the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, for example, above the door leading to the narthex, is considered one of the finest of its kind. The body of the Mother of God lies in bed, while an unemotional Christ stands holding the innocent soul of His Mother in the form of a swaddled babe (anachronisms are common in Byzantine art). St. John bends over the body, St. Paul weeps over the feet, St. Peter is opposite him, and the rest of the mourning Apostles are grouped on either side of the bed.

Above the dormition are painted the Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem and the Last Supper, in which the artist shows the agitated faces of the apostles. The face of Judas is depicted in profile, as this is how Byzantine art usually portrays bad or evil people. On the south wall of the west bay is the Raising of Lazarus. Below are the Emperor of Constantine the Great (sanctified) and his mother, Saint Helena, both in their imperial garments.

On the north wall opposite are the frescoes of the Washing of the Feet and the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, depicting soldiers of the Roman army who were martyred by exposure to the extreme freezing cold of a pond. These martyrs were the patron saints of the upper ranks of the imperial forces, as they represented the spirit of friendship and comradeship in the face of danger.

The roof of the central bay is covered with scenes relating to the life of Christ: the Nativity, the Presentation to the Temple, the Baptism, the Transfiguration, the Betrayal by Judas, the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion and the Entombment. The continuation of the cycle is in the lunette in the north arched recess, with the Three Marys at the Empty Tomb and the Resurrection.

The main theme of the narthex is the Last Judgement, where Christ Pantocrator (Master of All Things) dominates, surrounded by 10 medallions of half-length figures composing the Heavenly Host of Angels, separated by the Mother of God in the east and a six-winged seraphim in the west, also in roundels. On the four triangular dome supports are the full-figured 12 Apostles, in groups of three, ready to judge the 12 tribes of Israel.

The northern archway is covered by paintings of the Blessed depicted in four groups: the Prelates, the Prophets, the Holy, and the Martyrs. The southern archway of the narthex is covered by paintings of the Damned.

The remaining spaces on the walls of the narthex are covered by paintings of the Virgin Mary (in accordance with the rule that a church be decorated with many pictures of the individual to whom it is dedicated), Jesus Christ, monk-priests and saints, occasionally flanked by donors. The clothes of the latter are Western European of the period, which shows the fusion between Byzantine tradition and the Latin influences brought in by the Frankish conquerors who arrived in Cyprus in 1192 A.D.

On the right side of this door is Christ the almoner, while on the left is the Virgin Mary the Merciful. A very rare painting appears above Christ the Almoner, showing a hunting scene of moufflons and dogs. Hunting was indeed a favourite pastime of the upper classes in both the Byzantine and Frankish periods, but the appearance of a dog in a Byzantine painting is quite unique. The south apse bears the large fresco of St. George.



*Asinou Church:
View from the south west*



*Communion of the Apostles (1105/6):
sanctuary*



Dormition of the Mother of God (1105/6): nave

Peacekeeping Veterans Return to Scenes of the Past

Danes: 24/8

A group of Danish veterans who served with UNFICYP at various times in the period between 1974 and DANCON's departure in 1993, visited Camp Roca on 24 August.

The former peacekeepers had been stationed at Xeros, Skouriotissa, and Nicosia (Ledra Palace).

The veterans, whose ages ranged from 45 to 80 years, were received along with their families by Maj. Rubén Rodríguez (Camp Commandant), Maj. Héctor Gamba, SCAT1, the Argentinian military band, and personnel from the camp.

Maj. Gamba briefed the visitors about ARGCON's activities, and then the group was given a camp tour by Lt. Santiago Lamas.

One of the main reasons for the visit was so that the veterans could place a wreath in memory of F.S. A.A. Thomsen (who died in the service of peace on 26 November 1981). Since authorisation to cross the Lefka checkpoint was not given, personnel from Camp Roca built a replica of the memorial site, and a short



ceremony then took place in front of it to honour their dead comrade. As the military band performed the "Last Post", everyone present was deeply moved.

Later that same day, personnel from Alpha Company transported the wreath to the actual place of the accident located near UN OP 08.

Swedes: 1/9

On the morning of 1 September, 21 Swedish veterans, accompanied by members of their family, arrived in Camp Štefánik in Famagusta.

Lt. Col. Martin Baëko welcomed the group to the Officers' Mess, and then Maj. Ladislav Köblös, Senior Operations Officer Sector 4, gave them a briefing on role of the present Sector.

A gift was then presented by the group to Sector 4 of a Swedish flag as a reminder of the days when SWEDCON was part of UNFICYP.

The Adjutant, Maj. František Olšák, then escorted the group on a tour of the camp where the visitors took many photographs to remind them of their sentimental journey into the past.



Irish: 14/9

A group of Irish UN veterans arrived in Cyprus for a brief visit to UNFICYP. On 14 September, four past members of the Irish Defence Forces (two former UNFICYP members and two ONUC [United Nations Operation in the Congo] veterans), accompanied by their wives, paid a visit to HQ UNFICYP following a Green Line tour.

On arrival, they were greeted by UNFICYP Spokesman Brian Kelly and given a short briefing. Later they were hosted in the UNCIVPOL club by COMIRCON, Lt. Col. Paul Quirke.

The visitors were from No. 1 Post, the Irish UN Veterans Association, which comprises not only military members but also civilian staff who have served in UN missions. The leader of the group was Mr. Michael Canning.



Axcellent Driving!

WO1 Ramon Orlando Ledesma

Nobody can argue about the simple fact that men and women are different. In the old times, a woman's role was primarily associated with family and motherhood.

Not today, when women are as likely to be fully engaged in politics, business, academia, diplomacy, and yes, the military.

For example, one task previously unheard of for a woman, but a crucial one in Sector 1, is driving the water truck along the dangerous hills located in the west side of the buffer zone.

This difficult task has been assigned to Axel Flavia Núñez Olivieri, a Corporal in the Argentinian Army. This able and fearless driver handles her 10,000 litre capacity truck with skilled ease, surprising not only UN OP personnel but also OPFOR guards, farmers and other UN personnel she encounters.

"Here comes the 837" is a shout often heard at the OPs, signalling time for a small reception offering tea, juice, sandwiches and fruit salad (prepared just the way she likes it!!!). This is usually followed by a display of family pictures, jokes and some good-natured teasing! In short, everyone wants to show Axel their gratitude in



Axel on duty with her water truck!

every way possible! She is undoubtedly one person "they look forward to seeing" in the buffer zone.

Once she returns home, she will resume her "usual" duties, as a tank driver!!



Axel being presented with her UN medal by UNFICYP Spokesman Brian Kelly

Hungarians Win the Cup!

The UNFICYP Driving Competition, held on 19 August, provided a good opportunity for UNFICYP soldiers to demonstrate their driving skills along the line and in the HQ area. On this occasion, a Hungarian team made a concerted effort and won the cup for a year.

WO3 János Mitykó and SSgt. Zoltán Nagy were a good choice to represent the Hungarians. Of the 12 stands in the competition, they won first place on four, finishing in second place on another four.

Both are attached to 1 Coy's Transport Section. János and Zoltán come from different brigades in Hungary and had



Zoltán (left) with János

never met before their arrival in Cyprus. However, they have both participated several times in similar events back home, either as organiser or competitor.

Despite their extensive experience, however, the terrain caused some unexpected difficulties. Cross-country driving was their favourite stand, where a combination of common sense, patience and gravity proved more useful than speed. They particularly enjoyed the "fault-finding" test, especially since they were faultless!

Congratulations and good luck to the new Hungarian troops – hopefully they will find a successor team capable of retaining the cup for the Contingent.



Checking for mines - the hard way!

Visits to UNFICYP

During the month, UNFICYP had the pleasure of hosting several visitors to the mission.



30 August – Maj. Gen. Graeme Lamb, CMG DSO OBE, General Officer Commanding, 3rd (UK) Division



3 September – Mr. Yuri V. Fedotov (left), Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation with the CM



8 September – Gen. Roland Ertl, Chief of Defence Staff of the Austrian Armed Forces



15 September – Brig. C. Chapman, Commander 19th Mechanised Brigade, UK



20 September – Maj. Gen. Heikki Holma, Chief of the International Division of the Finnish Defence Staff



24 September – Maj. Gen. Peter Pearson CBE, Commander British Forces Cyprus with the CM (left) and COS (right)



27 September – Maj. Gen. Jorge Alberto Chevallier, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Argentina



29 September – H.E. Mr. Hamzah Hamzah, Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic



Far from Home

Father: Hello! My dear son, how are you?

Son: Where are you Daddy? I miss you very much. Mamma says that you have gone very far away to a foreign land.

Father: Yes, my son, I am very far away.

Son: Why don't you come home?

Father: I will come my son, I love you and I will come.

Son: Ankit's (friend) father also went very far away. His Mummy told him that he will not come back again.

Father: But, I will come back. I promise.

Son: I know that those who go very far away, never come back, will you come back?

Father (weeping): Yes, my dear I will come back.

Son: Ankit told me that his father has become a star in the sky. Have you become a star?

Father: No, my son I am still your father. I have not become a star.

Son (crying): If you have become a star in the sky, can you make me also a tiny star and keep near you. I love you Daddy and I want to be near you.

Father: I will come back, I will.

Son: Every time you talk on the phone and say that you will come back soon, but you don't come back. You said you will come back on the 25th but you did not come. I know those who die never come back.

Father: I am very much alive my son and I will come back (weeping).

Son: Daddy, Mummy always says that if you study hard and come first in the class, your daddy will come back with lots of toys and gifts. Daddy, I do not watch TV, I have stopped playing video-games as well. I want

to come first in the class. I am doing all my homework every day on my own. Will you come back now?

Father: Yes, my son I will come back. If you study hard you will become a great and successful man.

Son: Mummy also says the same every time. Study hard. But if I become a big and successful man, I will also have to go very, very far away. But Dad I do not want to go far away from you.

Father: I will explain to you everything when I come back after finishing my duty (mission) here.

Son: Daddy, when you had a duty here in Bhopal, why did you go very far away?

Father: So that I can save some more money for you and bring more toys, good clothes and everything you need.

Son: But I need you, I do not need toys, a new bike, clothes and comic books. I will never ask for candies, ice-cream and chocolates. Bhajee (elder brother) says that he will also not ask for anything. Will you please come back now?

Father (weeping): I am always with you my son, near you. Whenever you remember me, I will be near you.

Son: Daddy, Every Sunday we go to the Gurudwara (sikh temple) and Mummy always asks us to close our eyes and pray to God so that you come back home safe and healthy. Mamma says that God hears our prayers. Daddy, when he can hear our prayers, then you must have heard my "Hello!" which I said in between the prayers. Did you hear that?

Father: Yes, my son I heard your sweet Hello.

Son: Bye, Daddy. Now I have to go because my friends have come to play. Bye-bye.

(This is a real conversation between a father and his six-year-old son)

Satwinder Singh Lally
Inspector & Contingent Commander

HUNCON's Super Chef Departs

By Maj. Szilard Várölgyi

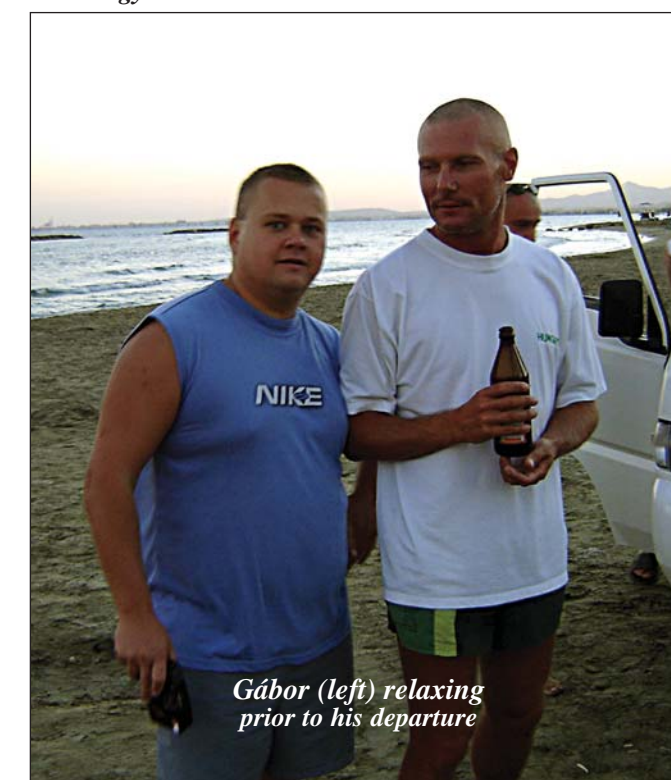
Hungarian parties are well-known for their traditional food. Many of you, I hope, will have had the opportunity to sample this fare at one of our parties. The most important ingredient for a good meal is a good chef. Huncon is very proud of its chef, MSgt. Gábor Turcsik, whose culinary skills are outstanding. He was an essential ingredient at all our parties, tirelessly working in the background. He will be sorely missed, and not only at mealtime....

"Like most people, I enjoy making others happy. I do this through my cooking. It is a pleasure for me to do it for my mates." Not only did he cook for us, but he was also a regular in the Hungarian Ambassador's kitchen. Once the Ambassador tasted his cooking, he didn't have much choice...

Gábor began his career as a civilian after finishing technical school, working in various restaurants as a sous-chef. During that time he acquired solid experience while sharpening his seasoning skills, that vital ingredient in the making of any good chef.

Besides cooking, Gábor is an exercise enthusiast, especially when it comes to running, which he does well enough to command our respect.

His tour went by quickly, and he is anxiously awaited at the 5th "Alba Regia" Command Support Battalion in Székesfehérvár. Like all good chefs, he is much in demand!



Gábor (left) relaxing prior to his departure

Karpas School Reopens

On 13 September, the headmaster's bell chimed at the Rizokarpaso Greek Cypriot secondary school marking the beginning of the term – after a long gap of 29 years. The secondary school would enable children from the primary school to continue their study in Rizokarpaso itself. In fact, a primary school pupil moved up and 11 others returned from the south to resume secondary schooling at their native village.



Some 15 teachers would teach pupils at the seventh, eighth and ninth grades with subjects ranging from physics to music. Only a handful would take residence. Others would commute from the south since they would be teaching only one or two days in a week.

UNFICYP's good offices played a vital role in enabling the school. CCAO Kannan noted on the opening day that "UNFICYP was happy that it was of some assistance".

Audley and Ali Put Their Weight Behind UN

By Kristian Gray

Heavyweight boxer Audley Harrison compared preparing for a fight to serving on the front line during his recent visit to the UN in Nicosia.

The 32-year-old, who shot to fame four years ago after winning Britain's first Olympic gold in boxing for 32 years, was speaking to a packed crowd during his Combined Services Entertainment (CSE) trip to meet the soldiers.

A-Force, as he is known in boxing circles, told eager fans, that although he chooses to fight, he still needs some of the qualities that make the Armed Forces what they are.

He said: "You guys do a great job and it really is a privilege to be here and meet you all and when I am preparing for a big match-up, I have to cope with similar feelings to those you experience when you are on front-line."

"It would be unfair to say they are same because the situation is very different but we all have to cope with anxiety, nerves and adrenalin and the most important thing



Audley with the lads from Sector 2



UN HQ New York: Muhammad Ali, UN Messenger of Peace and former three-time World Heavyweight Champion boxer, at the Peace Bell Ringing ceremony on 21 September, the International Day of Peace

is to learn how to control them. If you can do that, then you will be successful."

Until Danny Williams' recent triumph over Mike Tyson, Harrison was arguably Britain's most high profile fighter but despite a very public war of words, A-Force is cheering his opponent all the way to the top.

"I really want my fight with Danny Williams to go ahead and if he wins the world title, then the public will demand it happens and if I can get myself in contention it should be a great match," he said.

"I have always maintained that I have a five-year plan. By March 2006, I want to be in a position to fight for the world title, or already be champion. I am a future boxing great, so keep supporting me."

After answering questions from his fans, the UN took the big man on a tour of the green line and he enjoyed learning more about the situation on the island.

"It has been a great experience being here, there is a lot of history in Cyprus and the tour was a real eye opener and I am grateful to CSE and the UN for making it possible."

Helicopter Training

In keeping with their SOP training duties, UN Flight staff ran familiarization classes for all UNFICYP personnel in helicopter safety procedures during the months of June and July.

Running the courses were 1/Lt. Maximiliano Ravera, WOII José Arroyo, SSgt. Diego Gérez, Sgt. Pablo Miño and Sgt. Claudio Dávila.

The objective was to ensure that UNFICYP personnel are fully familiar with safety aspects of helicopter operations, especially with regard to boarding and exiting the aircraft and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC-CASEVAC) procedures.

Classes consisted of basic safety rules and procedures for helicopter air operations, including knowledge about



Demonstration on what to do in the case of emergency

safe distance, helicrash training, passenger training, safety points, dangers areas of the helicopters, conduct of passengers during the flight, emergency procedures and basic marshalling.

UN Flight staff will continue its familiarization classes for all personnel involved in helicopter air operations.

A Condor's Journey

As a member of the Argentinian Task Force 23, and finding himself so close to the Troodos mountains, WO1 Oscar Alberto Grandolio started commenting: "I'll come and visit you soon". None of his comrades took him seriously, even though he was an experienced mountaineer.

Then one night while chatting with them, he made the announcement: "I am going". At the time, everyone offered to join him – 16 in total – even though none of them believed he was being serious.

On 10 July at 04.00 hours, Oscar was ready to set off on his expedition. This experienced

mountaineer and skier was determined to walk to Mount Olympus (1,953 metres) and back to Camp San Martin. The day and time had arrived, but none of his comrades appeared.

He waited for 30 minutes and then, as silently as the dawn, he began his journey alone. His "odyssey" went on for 13 hours, walking 68 km as temperatures rose, in some places up to 43°C.

He felt he was back home in his natural environment, breathing in the mountain air, watching the birds fly, listening to the ringing of the church bells from the nearby villages.

He completed the entire trek! He finally fulfilled his dream!



2004 Olympic Day Run

Under the aegis of the Cyprus Olympic Committee, a Five Kilometre Olympic Day Run was organised by the local "Cyprus Health Runners Club" and the "Pericles Demetriou Running Club" in downtown Nicosia on the evening of 31 July.

Runners from nearly all UNFICYP Contingents took part, many escorted by family members who readily joined in as well.

Indeed, out of a 200-strong entry, UNFICYP and family was well represented in the top three positions in many categories – an outstanding feat!

This was especially true in the overall female results, where the younger girls could not defeat the more experienced ladies. There was also a one-kilometre fun run for the under-12-year-olds. The youngest runners were the four-year-old twins of AUSTCIVPOL's Jeff Little.

The route wound through several of the main streets of Nicosia leading into the historical old city atop the Venetian Walls. The temperature, an acceptable 28°C, was not too high for the season and the light breeze on the



home stretch just about cooled the runners.

The event was sponsored by McDonalds, who provided free refreshments after the finish while the results were being processed. A great evening was enjoyed by all.

UNFICYP Driving Skills Competition

