



BLUE BERET

MINE CLEARANCE AT MAMMARI

On Tuesday, 26 May 2015, UNFICYP deployed a demining team to a mine hazard area in the Cyprus buffer zone north of Mammari village. The 20-strong team from Cambodia is providing technical expertise and equipment as part of UNFICYP's inter-mission cooperation with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The deployment followed an initial assessment by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in February 2015 and a further survey by experts from UNIFIL in April 2015, which showed that mines were displaced from north of the ceasefire line into this part of the buffer zone by winter floods.

LATEST NEWS

Nearly two months on, the team has cleared approximately 30% of the affected area. To date, they have found and destroyed the components of 3 anti-tank mines and 1 anti-personnel mine. To avoid a mine wash like this one reoccurring in the future at Mammari, UNFICYP has liaised closely with the Turkish Cypriot authorities and secured their commitment to clear the area north of the ceasefire line in the coming months.



FORCE COMMANDER VISIT

On Wednesday, 10 June 2015, Force Commander Major General Kristin Lund, accompanied by her team, including Chief of Operations Officer Lt Col De la Vega, visited the demining operation at Mammari. Cambodian demining team leader 2LT Sovannara Leang was on hand to give a comprehensive operational briefing. The FC also inspected the mine hazard area, demining equipment and medical assistance facilities. During the visit, the FC had the chance to meet with all members of the demining team and to speak with them about their efforts. Gen Lund recognized the risk and difficulty of their work, and stressed the importance of ensuring the area is clear and safe, given its close proximity to farmland around Mammari village. She extended her deep appreciation for their professionalism and hard work.

SAFETY WARNING

With UNMAS support, UNFICYP has conducted mine safety outreach to the Mammari community, and continues to cooperate closely with the village authorities. Members of the public continue to be urged to maintain a safe distance from the hazard area, to obey the mine warning signs, and comply with UNFICYP's instructions. Throughout this period, UNFICYP will continue to conduct patrols to ensure safety and security around the hazard area.

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