Saint Patrick’s Day Celebrations in the UNPA

First Integrated Medal Parade

The Blue Beret
March 2005
Much has indeed happened for us to celebrate over the three decades that we have observed International Women’s Day at the United Nations. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women has been ratified by 179 countries. Milestones such as the Beijing Conference and Platform for Action have served as engines of progress for women around the world. And the voices of women are being heard loud and clear across the whole range of issues before the United Nations. But we are still not hearing as many of women’s voices as we should. And there are still far too many obstacles that prevent women from advancing and thriving in the Organisation. We must work harder to correct this. The reasons why are obvious:

First, women possess half the brain power of the universe. Any institution that fails to make use of half its potential intellectual or creative assets is short-changing itself.

Second, there are no issues we deal with in the United Nations that do not affect women every bit as much as men. It is, therefore, right and indeed necessary that women should be here to work on these issues, with equal strength and in equal number.

And third, the United Nations must live up to – and be seen to live up to – the principles that we set out for the early post-conflict phase and in laying the foundations for more equal societies. Our peacemaking missions have a critical role to play in redressing these gaps in the early post-conflict phase and in the economic, political, legal, constitutional and socio-cultural spheres. We must do more than state our commitment to the priority of women. We must translate our commitment into practice, including in the economic, political, legal, constitutional and socio-cultural spheres.

There is much work to be done. Violence against women is a pervasive threat to women’s basic human rights in conflict and post-conflict situations, when the rule of law is weak. In horrifying numbers, women and girls are subjected to rape, forced marriages and other forms of physical and psychological abuses during wartime. In the aftermath of war, economic restitution and organised crimes drive many into forced prostitution. Others are vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Such exploitation has shamefully, in some cases, been perpetrated by international members of peacekeeping missions, peacekeepers who have a responsibility to protect the vulnerable. Every effort is being taken to investigate such acts and to put in place the necessary reforms to ensure they do not recur.

In a number of mission areas, DPKO staff are teaming up with UN partners and local women’s rights groups to address the scourge of gender-based violence at the national level. Gender units are playing a critical role in training and sensitising peacekeeping personnel on gender mainstreaming approaches related to their work and helping to build strategies to prevent gender-based violence.

A gender perspective is also being increasingly applied to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes, but we must redouble our efforts to ensure that women associated with fighting forces are recognised as such and are able to access support under DDR programmes.

This year, DPKO has an important role to play to advocate and support women’s contributions to shaping the future of their countries, through ongoing planning for elections and constitutional reforms in a number of UN missions. In Afghanistan, Burundi, the DRC, Haiti and Liberia, gender units in missions are working closely with electoral units, governmental partners and women’s groups to facilitate meaningful participation of women in forthcoming elections in these countries, both as candidates seeking political office and as voters.

And in these and all other aspects of peacekeeping, we must continue to listen to the voices of the host communities, particularly women and girls, whose voices, more often than not, tend to be marginal to decision-making processes.

As we mark International Women’s Day, I invite all staff of DPKO to recommit to promoting, in all aspects of peacekeeping, the principles of equality between women and men.

Jean-Marie Guéheno, USG, DPKO

Women’s Day at LPH by Sally-Anne Corcoran

On 8 March, UNFICYP celebrated International Women’s Day by hosting a panel of six distinguished Cypriot women from the academic, journalistic and public spheres who discussed the theme of: “Gender Equality beyond 2005 – building a more secure future”, a most appropriate theme for the island. Without exception, they spoke in an inspiring and reconciliation fashion about the type of Cyprus they envisaged sharing together in the future from a gender perspective. In my capacity of UNFICYP Gender Focal Point, I moderated the panel and gave my own opinion about what “building a more secure future” from a gender perspective meant, before moving on to our panelists and to the Cypriot perspective.

I mentioned how in recent years, the SG had talked about “security” in a more expanded or holistic way and termed it “human security”, which no longer means only freedom from fear or physical safety, but also freedom to develop equally with men and access to the same opportunities for doing so (professionally, academically and financially).

However, freedom from fear continues to remain a prime concern and not just in conflict or war zones.

Women’s Day in peacekeeping and post-conflict

In October 2005, we will mark the 50th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

In DPKO, International Women’s Day provides an opportunity to take stock of progress in strengthening the role of women in all aspects of peacekeeping, as well as to recommit to addressing the persisting challenges that remain for women and girls in countries all too profoundly devastated by prolonged armed conflicts.

I know that many staff are working under very difficult conditions to promote and protect the rights of women and girls in peacemaking missions around the world and for that, I salute you all and encourage you to continue in these efforts.

All the same, for the majority of women in countries of conflict, the quest to find a voice in peace processes and to attain equality with men remains a distant reality. The participation of women in peace negotiations is the exception rather than the rule, which limits their opportunity to influence and highlight gender-specific issues in all aspects of the post-conflict agenda, including in the economic, political, legal, constitutional and socio-cultural spheres.

Our peacemaking missions have a critical role to play in redressing these gaps in the early post-conflict phase and in laying the foundations for more equal societies. There is much work to be done. Violence against women is a pervasive threat to women’s basic human rights in conflict and post-conflict situations, when the rule of law is weak. In horrifying numbers, women and girls are subjected to rape, forced marriages and other forms of physical and psychological abuses during wartime. In the aftermath of war, economic restitution and organised crimes drive many into forced prostitution. Others are vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Such exploitation has shamefully, in some cases, been perpetrated by international members of peacekeeping missions, peacekeepers who have a responsibility to protect the vulnerable. Every effort is being taken to investigate such acts and to put in place the necessary reforms to ensure they do not recur.

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Continued on page 14
Strategy for Fighting Terrorism

The Secretary-General’s keynote address to the closing plenary of the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism and Security, delivered in Madrid, Spain on 10 March 2005

Terrorism is a threat to all States, to all peoples, which can strike anytime, anywhere. It is a direct attack on the core values the United Nations stands for: the rule of law, the respect for human rights and the Rule of Law. If we sacrifice them always be respected. As I see it, terrorism is in itself a direct attack on human rights and the rule of law. It cannot include the right to deliberately kill or wound civilians. The Panel calls for a definition of terrorism which would make it clear that any act of terrorism is intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians and non-combatants, with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a Government to act in accordance with a terrorist organisations to do or abstain from any act. I believe this proposal has clear moral force, and I strongly urge world leaders to unite behind it. Not only political leaders, but civil society and religious leaders should clearly denounce terrorism tactics as criminal and intolerable. Civil society can become significant forces against terrorism. The United Nations could adopt and promote the eight campaigns against landmines, against the recruitment of child soldiers, and against allowing war crimes to go unpunished. I should like to see an equally strong global campaign against terrorism.

Finally, we must pay more attention to the victims of terrorism, and make sure that their voices can be heard. We at the UN especially are conscious of this, having lost beloved colleagues to a terrorist attack in Baghdad two years ago. The General Assembly in its resolution 1566, suggested an international fund to compensate victims and their families, to be financed in part from assets seized from terrorism sponsors. This suggestion should be urgently followed up.

I will now turn to the second D: denying terrorists the means to carry out their threats. Our goal is to make it difficult for them to travel, to receive financial support, or to acquire nuclear or radiological material.

We also need effective action against money-laundering. Here the United Nations could adopt and promote the eight international anti-terrorist treaties. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime Prevention is experienced in this work and is prepared to do more.

The United Nations Development Programme focuses on the role of development as a preventative measure. Over the past few years, the Programme has worked on a shoe-string budget, has done an impressive job.

Terrorism and Security Council, in its resolution 1373, required every State to refrain from financing, directly or indirectly, Al-Qaeda or any other terrorist organization. This firm line must be maintained and strengthened. All States must know that, if they give any kind of support to terrorism, or if they fail to use coercive measures against it.

The fourth D is to develop State capacity to prevent terrorism. Terrorists exploit weak States as havens where they can hide from arrest, and train their recruits. Making all States more capable and responsible must therefore be the cornerstone of our global counter-terrorism effort. This means promoting good governance and above all the rule of law, with professional police and security forces who respect human rights.

The United Nations has already done a lot in this area. The Secretary-General’s Resolution 1373 required every State to take important steps in preventing terrorism. The counter-Terrorism Committee follows how well States are implementing their obligations. But many poor countries cannot afford to build up the capacity they need. They need help. The new Council-Terrorism Counter-Programme offers hope.

Every State must be able to develop and maintain an efficient criminal justice system. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime Prevention has the experience and know-how, in which some terrorists clearly use. In a world of excess hazardous materials and abundant technological know-how, in which some terrorists clearly state their intention to inflict catastrophic casualties. Were such an attack to occur, it would not only cause widespread death and destruction, but it would also undermine the economy and thrust tens of millions of people into dire poverty. Given what we know of the relationship between poverty and terrorism, it is vital that we do not give them the tools they need.

Terrorists groups find it easiest to recruit among people with a narrow or distorted view of the world. We must therefore help give all its citizens a modern education that encourages scientific inquiry and free thought. UNESCO has done good work in this area, but I hope we can do more.

Few threats more vividly illustrate the imperative of building State capacity than biological terrorism, which could spread death and destruction faster, even over a smaller distance and cause much more suffering. Neither States nor international organisations have yet adapted to a new world of biotechnology, full of promise and potential, but also capable of causing panic and of jeopardising hard-won gains.

We must resolve to do everything in our power to spare others from meeting their fate. To all victims around the world, our words of sympathy can do nothing. We must resolve to do everything in our power to stop the threat before we have to say it again.

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The Irish Police and Military Contingents in Cyprus celebrated their national holiday, St. Patrick’s Day, in style on 17 March, baked in glorious Cypriot sunshine.

St. Patrick’s Day is known and celebrated by the Irish in every country in the world, and it is the day we are proud to be Irish, especially those of us who live and work abroad.

The celebrations here in UNPA commenced with Mass and the blessing of the shamrock (the three-leaf clover) at St. Columbas Church. The chief celebrant was Father Ciaran Dallat, a visiting priest from Northern Ireland, assisted by Padre Lee Gandiya who is attached to Sector 2. Following mass, the contingents and their families were invited to a reception at the residence of the Irish Ambassador and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. John Swift. Here, UNFICYP personnel met many other Irish people resident or working on the island.

Celebrations continued back in the UNPA with a further reception hosted by Supt. Liam Mayock of the Irish Police Force (An Garda Siochana) and Lt. Col. Paul Quirke (Irish Army). Here, police, military and civilians were treated to famous Irish delicacies including traditional Irish stew, Irish smoked salmon, Irish coffees and Bailey’s Irish Cream. Whilst sampling these delights, a dance group from Ireland performed, accompanied by a traditional folkloric band.

One member of the audience noted: “It’s strange, but the guitarist looks very much like the priest who conducted mass this morning”. The reply was: “It is the priest – he’s a man of many talents!”.

It was also a pleasure for the event’s organisers to welcome and introduce well-known and popular Irish politician, Mr. Alan Dukes. Ambassador Swift spoke eloquently about Ireland, its people, culture and traditions, and he read out a message of peace and unity from the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese.

As can be seen from the photographs, fun and frolics was enjoyed by all.

So, who was St. Patrick? Legend has it that he was taken to Ireland as a slave (from England, Scotland or Wales). He went to Rome and studied for the priesthood, following which he was divinely inspired to return to pagan Ireland and convert its people to Christianity. The story goes that he preached the word of God and explaining the Holy Trinity by using the Shamrock. He is also reputed to have driven the snakes out of Ireland.

The Irish Contingent would like to thank most sincerely all those who helped make their National Day 2005 a very memorable one.

The fully-booked Tulip and Riviere Court hotels stand on the golden sand coast of Cyprus. The views are breathtaking. Imagine a sunset splashed with orange, blue, and violet, just like the fairy-tale horizon in the film “Never Ending Story”. The rooms are equipped with bed canopies and protective mosquito netting.

The Tulip and Riviere Court hotels are better known as UN OPs 149 and 152. This is where 12 Slovak peacekeepers work and live. The hotels-turned-OPs are positioned inside the Varosha ghost town.

Since 1974, UNFICYP has sought to monitor maintenance of the status quo within the fenced-off area as best it can. The peacekeepers patrol on the designated tracks within the eerie “dead city”. They patrol along the designated route. Inside the buildings housing the OPs, all rooms are sealed off except for the entrance, work-stations on the rooftop, and the bedrooms on one of the floors where the peacekeepers sleep. Even the elevators are sealed off. The peacekeepers therefore walk up 11 flights of stairs to reach their work stations on the rooftops.

There is a daily delivery of food and other essential items for operational personnel. Other than a short strip of accessible beach, the only recreational facility available is a TV, making the Varosha experience a true challenge to morale. Nevertheless, the 12 Slovaks working on the easternmost part of the buffer zone meet that challenge head on, which, on their 12-month tours, is no mean feat.
Up until now, each contingent on the island has held its own Medal Parade within sector. In January, the new Force 860 concept was introduced and all contingents have been scaled down since. Now that each contingent has reduced in size, it was decided that it would make more sense to have one big parade.

The obvious location for the newly integrated medal parade was the UNPA, as this is the central location along the Buffer Zone. Being a "winter" parade, an indoor site was in order. UN Flight kindly donated a hangar to house the show. Not wanting to feel left out, the MFR took on the job of organising and running the event.

But this was no easy task. UN Flight had to rehouse their helicopters elsewhere. They also had to put up with people running around their airfield trying to march and perform demos while scattering kit here, there and everywhere.

Once the hangar was cleared, the MFR started acquiring kit from many strange sources; chairs, a saluting dias, flags, Tacticas, tents, a public address system, potted plants… and then setting it all up. There was also plenty of white and blue painting to be done.

The simple task of coordinating all the nationalities into a smooth and presentable parade fell to the BSM MFR, WO2 Whiteway. Different drill, different languages and different uniforms didn't seem to be too much of a challenge, and each contingent was given its instructions on the format of events.

All the elements were assembled for the first practice on 22 February. After a few attempts, things started to look like they would work on the day. The second practice saw the officers kitted out in their best day dress, turning a drab rehearsal into quite a colourful event. The MFR Honour Guard perfected mixing its different drills into one. The Argentinian band was doing a fine job rehearsing the national anthems and the marching music for each contingent.

Thursday, the day of the parade, was a beautiful sunny day. Chefs from Slovakia, Hungary, UK and Argentina laboured to deliver amazing traditional food from each host nation. The seating arrangements were in place and the ushers were briefed on where the VIPs were to sit.

Then, just prior to the parade, the heavens opened and rain started dripping through the roof of the hangar. It was looking like the initial march into the hangar was going to have to be cut out. Then at the eleventh hour, the rain died away and the parade went ahead as planned.

Contingents and honour guard entered to their marching music cue, courtesy of the Argentinian band. Chief of Mission Włosowicz acknowledged the parade’s new format and paid tribute to the contingents before joining Force Commander Maj. Gen. Figoli and members of the diplomatic community in presenting the medals.

Once the ceremony was over, everyone adjourned to the tents outside for drinks and to sample the food that the chefs had managed to keep intact during the downpour. While folk-dancing and other musical diversions were on display inside the hangar, such was the allure of the chefs’ culinary skills, most people hovered close to the sumptuous array of food in the tents alongside.

As the evening drew to a close, all the remaining food and drink was cleared away. Following a general cleaning, UN Flight retrieved its hangar and everything else was returned wherever MFR BQMS Bright had found it.

UNFICYP’s First Integrated Medal Parade
International Cafeteria – Working Hard for You

According to Michael, the changes outlined below are the main ones that have had the greatest impact on the customer’s meal experience in the dining room. These changes have been developed with the cooperation and guidance of the Force Supply Officer, Maj. Alan Stapley (right).

The most recent change has been the upgrade and repositioning of the dessert buffet in the dining room. The newest member of the team, Eleni Vai Markidou, who was selected among many applicants from different organisations in Cyprus, is enticing everyone with her handmade sweets and pastries. The great enthusiasm she has brought to the team and the impression that she has made on the customers at the International Cafeteria has earned Eleni the title of Chef of the Month for January 2005, quite a feat since she only joined the team on 1 January!

The beverages buffet, which was designed and built locally according to specifications from the Facilities Manager, has been positioned in the centre of the dining room. This has improved the layout of the cafeteria, making it similar to traditional catering outlets that allow easy access to all customers and provide a less formal environment. Additionally, the installation of a hi-fi system has improved the atmosphere of the cafeteria, making it a more relaxed meal experience for the customers. Over Christmas, seasonal CDs added to the festive spirit.

ESS strives to provide only the best service for its customers, and, in accordance with this aim, staff at the International Cafeteria continue to attend ongoing training sessions related to customer satisfaction. These sessions are run by Michael, together with personnel from HQ Eurest. The latest training was on Safety in the Kitchen and Food Hygiene.

Customer satisfaction is monitored by regular food tastings by the Force Supply Officer and through questionnaires placed on the dining room tables during meal times. This is in addition to feedback given directly to the facilities manager at any time.

Home from Home

In 1993, the Argentinian Task Force took over responsibility for the western part of the buffer zone (Sector 1) from the Danish Contingent. Since then, it has been carrying out patrols duties along the buffer zone, which in Sector 1’s area measures a distance of approximately 80 km and a width of 4 km to 250 metres. The patrol track was divided into three sections, each of them named after areas in Argentina which resemble the landscape seen on a daily basis. These tracks are called “Andes”, “Patagonia” and “Pampas” respectively. The aim of this article is to explain the reasons for having chosen these names, so significant to the Argentinians, and also to make a comparison between the route we patrol and the geographical environment of our beloved country.

Argentina

Argentina is located in South America and stretches over a length of almost 3.8 million km², of which 2.8 million lie in the continent and the rest in the Antarctic. The country borders Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia and Chile, with a perimeter of 29,038 km and a maritime waterfront facing the Atlantic Ocean of 5,117 km. Argentina has a population of 37 million inhabitants.

The Andes Track

The Andes Track starts in the northwest of Cyprus in the vicinity of Kato Pyrgos. It stretches along a length of approximately 74 km, offering one of the most beautiful natural landscapes on the island. Its mountains, hills, plateaus and gorges, together with the beautiful streams and vegetation, remind us of our dear Andes.

The Andes, the mountain range which runs the length of Argentina, takes its name from the indigenous Aymarí language and means “Lighted Mountain”, the reason being that its peaks are the first to be illuminated at sunrise and the last to be touched by the sunrays at dawn.

The Patagonia Track

Travelling east, the Andes patrol track ends and the Patagonia track begins, running close to OPT 17.

The Pampa Track

Moving on, Cyprus surprises us with a completely different land configuration compared to the previous two tracks. The Pampa track begins near PB 32 and stretches over a length of 40 km, and is a flat, fertile area.

Here, the name “Pampa” was formerly used when referring to the extended plains, or simply “pampas”, of our central region. In Argentina, the Pampas region represents a key axe for her economy, providing fertile and capable lands for all types of farming and livestock breeding.

As soldiers of the Argentinian Contingent, we feel that, even though a great distance separates us from our country, the island’s geographical features constantly remind us of our home, making us feel not quite so far away.

Capt. Fernando Gallotta and Maj. Diego Sanchez

March 2005 - The Blue Beret

.anyone for coffee?

Eleni baking her delicacies

Chef Dafniou Tsangari - service with a smile

Capt. Fernando Gallotta and Maj. Diego Sanchez

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The Blue Beret

The Andes (Argentina)

“Pampas” (Cyprus)

“Pampas” (Argentina)

“Patagonia” (Cyprus)

“Patagonia” (Argentina)

“The Andes” (Argentina)

“The Andes” (Cyprus)
**UNFICYP Hears Wedding Bells**

When Capt. Daniel Zegarac arrived in Cyprus as a bachelor back in July 2003, he never realized that his days as a single man were numbered.

Back in November 2003, Dan met Larysa Bovkun in her hometown of Kherson. At the time he was vacationing in Ukraine, and was on his way to visit such touristic hotspots as Sevastopol and its Russian naval ships and submarines. Criminal battlegrounds, and last but not least, the famous Yalta.

After countless letters, SMS, phone calls and a couple of visits in between, the couple were last summer happily able to be reunited here in Cyprus, the birthplace of Aphrodite, Goddess of Love. With the spark from Aphrodite, and a proposal in Jordan, they were engaged.

The Blue Beret is very happy to announce their marriage at the Nicosia Town Hall on Thursday, 24 March. Honeymoon plans are already underway, with marriage at the Nicosia Town Hall on Thursday, 24 March. Honeymoon plans are already underway, with marriage at the Nicosia Town Hall on Thursday, 24 March. Honeymoon plans are already underway, with marriage at the Nicosia Town Hall on Thursday, 24 March. Honeymoon plans are already underway, with marriage at the Nicosia Town Hall on Thursday, 24 March. Honeymoon plans are already underway, with marriage at the Nicosia Town Hall on Thursday, 24 March. Honeymoon plans are already underway, with marriage at the Nicosia Town Hall on Thursday, 24 March.

**Dancon Veterans visit Roca Camp**

Dancon veterans were among the first to serve with UNFICYP when it was set up in March 1964. Then, in 1993, DANCONEZ bade farewell to the island and left to carry out peacekeeping duties in Croatia, Kosovo and missions around the world, handing over to the Argentinian Contingent. Over the years, more than 25,000 troops served with DANCONEZ in Cyprus.

In Denmark, 17 veteran associations have been established throughout the country. There are more than 3,000 active members who “kindle the fire” and share their memories of UNFICYP and the island. On 15 March, a group of association members gathered to commemorate the anniversary of the death of one of their comrades, just as they had done for another comrade in August 2004. They visited Roca Camp, once their own home, where they laid a wreath in the memory of their friend.

**Danish Ambassador visits Sector 4**

Danish Ambassador H.E. Mr. Svend Waever visited UNFICYP on 2 March. He arrived at the UNPAX and was greeted by Force Commander Maj. Gen. Hebert Figoli, following which he travelled by car to Camp General Stéfanik, Famagusta, for a briefing by CO Sector 4 Lt. Col. Martin Baßko. Ambassador Waever stayed for lunch in Sector 4. On his way back to Nicosia, he paid a visit to the UNICIVPOL Station in Pyla.

**Farewell Fare!**

Bar was decorated with balloons and farewell banners. The evening got off to a good start (for the English) with a victory over Scotland in the Six Nations Rugby tournament. Then the entertainment started. Amanda, now a regular performer, sang her first set, with Bdr. Robinson, a very regular performer, acting as a one-man dance troop and backing vocals. With burgers providing sustenance, it was the turn of the magician before the Kylie tribute artiste arrived. By now, the party was in full swing and the dance floor was packed.

Even the dancing had a multi-national feel to it with salsa and tango provided by the Argentinians and the “locomotion” and “air guitar” by the Brits. It seems a shame to single anyone out, but Ssgt. “Richie” Hollo-

**Service with a Theme**

One of the recent changes in the International Cafeteria is the introduction of themed lunches, which are now a weekly feature. These take into consideration the nationalities of the customers at the International Cafeteria, but also include other popular cuisines from around the world.

The Eurest team are very enthusiastic about this scheme. When meals are provided from UNFICYP, the chef from the sector/unit arrives to discuss the menu and recipes, but then it is left to the team to provide and serve the meal. These lunches include traditional dishes and desserts and are, according to feedback from customers, a great success.
Soldiers Decorated

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ince the downsizing of UNFICYP, medal parades have changed their format to combine the presentation and numbers of all Sectors and Units into one parade. However, due to operational reasons, five officers and 36 NCOs in Sector 1 were unable to attend either the last Sector 1 Medal Parade in San Martin Camp on 24 January or the first integrated Medal Parade at HQ UNFICYP on 24 February.

These men therefore stood to attention in the grounds of San Martin Camp on 17 March and were decorated by their Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. Federico Sidders. Following the presentation, Lt. Col. Sidders addressed the recipients, highlighting the significance of completing their mission. The ceremony ended with a parade and later a traditional “asado” (the Argentinian barbecue) was served at the NCOs’ Mess.

Basketball and Football Aces


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ector 4 organised a basketball tournament in a local stadium on 21 February. Teams from Sectors 1, 2, 3, 4 and the HQ participated. Even though the HQ team (above) were “veteran players”, even though they had not practised a lot, even though they were not the “dream team”, they still won 2nd prize!

Women’s Day at LPH: Continued from Page 3

Violence against women is often much more subtle and perpetrated in both the private and public spheres. To my mind, real security entails not only equal access to equal opportunities, but equal respect on all levels. For example, it means a workplace free of harassment, where women are integrated as full and equal partners in the decision making process. It also means targeted activities to address gaps and inequalities between women and men in all spheres and it means women’s empowerment which is the only thing that can really challenge gender inequality.

In the decade since the 1995 Beijing Conference, which many of the panelists attended, life for many of the world’s women has become tougher, yet in the words of the SG in his message, “the challenges facing women are not problems without solutions”.

Medevac Exercise in Sector 4

O
n 27 January, a night MEDEVAC helicopter exercise was arranged in Sector 4 to review and practise medical evacuation drills during night hours.

The scenario was of two soldiers in a UN pick-up truck which “crashed” whilst on a routine patrol in the buffer zone near OPT 101. One of the patrol members reported the accident to the COMCEN of 1st Platoon, and this report followed the chain of command up to the activated MEDEVAC, whereupon the casualties were evacuated.

Spectators were present and given the chance to observe the procedures close at hand so as to raise any issue they thought significant. The exercise was pronounced a success.

While Others Subtract, UN Flight Adds!

U
NFICYP may be downsizing, but UN Flight is upsizing with the addition of one more helicopter pilot, Lt. Col. Guillermo Ortiz became UN Flight’s 28th pilot. The 27-year-old member of the Argentinian Air Force joined UNFICYP to help the helicopter fleet in fulfilling its new requirements. When asked how he feels about his new assignment, Guillermo says, “I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to serve with this mission and represent my country”.

As stipulated by UNHQ New York, UNFICYP is undergoing a reduction in personnel deployed to the island. UN Flight is adapting to these changes. The increase of in-flight hours is required to achieve better and more efficient aerial coverage of all tasks such as medevac, casevac, and special operations. One additional pilot was necessary to accomplish this effort.

Recognition of UN Flight’s professionalism over a period of 11 years of uninterrupted service confirms that good flight planning begins on the ground. So, as the rest of the contingents reduce their personnel, we add one more pilot to our line-up in order to meet the future demands that will come with these winds of change.

Families Run in Sector 1

S
ector 1 held a race on 5 March. The competition was divided into two cross-country runs, one covering a distance of 15km and the other one 7km. More than 100 participants competed over the difficult terrain of Sector 1 which, although tough at times, afforded them the opportunity to appreciate the scenery as they ran.

The 7km course was considered a “Families Run” and had one special participant, two-year-old Dorian (above, right) who proudly completed the course in Buggy 199, together with Dad, WO2 Sasha Nagy from HQ UNFICYP, and Mum, Alexandra.

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OC UN Flight Lt. Col. Osvaldo Albanesi (left) on his return from UNHQ/DPKOS Aviation Seminar (16-1k Feb) in NY, and Lt. Ortiz before his first recce flight of the island in a Hughes 500D

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