



Shamrock for  
St. Patrick's Day

# The Blue Beret

## March 2006



Meeting in  
Kyrenia



## THE BLUE BERET

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*SRS Michael Møller met with the Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat at his residence in Kyrenia on 27 March, during Mr. Talat's recuperation from heart bypass surgery. The Chief of Mission briefed the Turkish Cypriot leader on the Paris meeting between the Secretary-General and Tassos Papadopoulos.*

## Editorial

Sixteen months ago, in November 2004, de-mining began in a National Guard minefield in the buffer zone. Nine months later, that combination of UN support, Mine Action expertise and EU and other donor funding, propelled by the spirit of the Ottawa Treaty and UN Security Council resolutions to rid the buffer zone and the island of landmines once and for all, was boosted even further. On 12 August 2005, phase two of the de-mining project was launched with the detonation of two landmines in a Turkish Force minefield.

To date, 20 of the buffer zone's 48 minefields have been cleared and more than 900,000 square metres have been returned to normal use. In the process, the way has also been paved for new crossings, enabling the two communities to move about more freely, and opening up new opportunities for trade and commerce.

Now we must focus on the remaining minefields, both inside and outside the buffer zone. But for that we need the resources to complete the job. If the work is to continue, ridding the buffer zone of mines will take an estimated six million euros more. A further five million euros will be needed to achieve the ultimate goal of a mine-free Cyprus.

An appeal to the donor countries is being mounted at this time to maintain momentum. The amounts involved seem a small price to pay for helping accomplish so worthwhile and historic an objective.

## Contents

Editorial/Contents	2
Women's Day/Peacekeeping and Gender	3
The "Greening" of Cyprus	4
Diversity in the Sectors	5
News from HQ New York	6
Force Commander Lt. Gen. Barni Arrives	7
Environmental Issues	8/9
Speed & Safety: Attitude Counts	10
Honouring Gerry O'Sullivan/Taking the Plunge	11
Inspection of CMP Site/Aussie Entertainment/	
Looking Back at Blue Berets	12
New Faces/Thanks, Goodbye, Good Luck	13
Helicopter in a Box	14
Danish Veterans Return/Visitors	15

Front Cover: Meeting in Kyrenia  
Back Cover: Shamrock for St. Patrick's Day

## UNFICYP Marks Women's Day

UNFICYP hosted the annual 8 March International Women's Day celebrations at the Ledra Palace. A bi-communal panel of three Greek Cypriot and three Turkish Cypriot women, moderated by Sally Anne Corcoran, UNFICYP's Gender Focal Point, discussed the issue of the trafficking of women and girls in Cyprus and how to combat it. More than 100 people attended the event, which was widely covered by the press from both sides.

In her introductory remarks, Ms. Corcoran noted that trafficking is growing as an extremely profitable business. The constant demand for prostitution makes trafficking the third largest source of income for organised crime, surpassed only by drugs and arms. The main international legal instrument to combat this serious transnational crime is the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, she said. It entered into force in 2003 and was ratified by Cyprus the same year.

"On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Secretary-General quoted the Beijing Declaration which tells us that 'Women's empowerment and their full participation, on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision making processes and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace'.

"What is clear, is that if more women were involved in decision making at all levels, trafficking in human beings would not be the flourishing industry that it is today," said Ms. Corcoran.

The panelists then gave a Cypriot perspective of the problem. The function ended with a reception party, much enjoyed by all.



"Women have to raise a common banner to combat this shameful atrocity against ourselves and surely we can work together across barriers and make a difference!"

— Olga Demetriades

"Progress for women is progress for all"

"We need to come together, determined to commit to the strategies we can pursue together as a people, and most especially of course as a community of women in Cyprus."

— Meral Akinci

## Peacekeeping and Gender

In late March, some 50 troop-sending and troop-contributing countries took part in a two-day session run by DPKO at UN Headquarters in New York to help explore ways of increasing the number of women military and police personnel in UN peacekeeping missions.

DPKO Gender Adviser Comfort Lamptey said women were crucial in the field. In Liberia, for instance, the presence of women had contributed to disarming and demobilizing more than 20,000 female ex-combatants. That would not have been possible had women not been there as peacekeepers to screen the women ex-combatants. Moreover, the zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation was more effective with more women on the ground. Only 1% of all military personnel in peacekeeping were women – 746 women, 63,862 men. Women comprised only 4% of the police in peacekeeping, 314 world-wide, compared to 7,418 men.

She noted that DPKO was asking countries to recruit more women and to deploy more of them. Ms. Lamptey said women

wanted to work, not only in administrative or "women only" areas, when it came to their roles in peacekeeping operations. Women were needed to screen female ex-combatants in such areas as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The whole spectrum of peacekeeping activities had to be open to women in uniform.

Ambassador Nana Effah-Apenteng, Ghana's Permanent Representative to the UN, who co-chaired the meeting, said it was clear that "we cannot afford to do business as usual". As peace operations increased in complexity and in their impact on the lives of people in the countries they served, greater representation by women was needed to strengthen implementation in disarmament of former combatants, security sector reform, electoral support, and assistance to victims of rape and other violent crimes. It was also important to note that several troop-contributing countries had a much higher percentage of women in their armed forces and police service than they deployed in peacekeeping operations. Women



*Comfort Lamptey, Gender Adviser for DPKO, addresses correspondents during a press conference at UN HQ New York on 29 March*

in Ghana, for example, made up 9% of the military, yet only a fraction of them were deployed as peacekeepers.

Antero Lopes, UN Deputy Police Adviser, acknowledged that, to date, women only accounted for 4.1% of the police officers contributed by Member States. Less than 30 police-contributing countries had female officers, he noted. In Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste, women represented 25% of the police force. In Kosovo, the figure was just 14%.





## The “Greening” of Cyprus!

St. Patrick's Day, the day when the Irish, at home and abroad, engage in a glorious outpouring of national pride and cheerful celebrations. We, the Irish contingent of UNPOL, were not going to be found wanting – we would do our country proud.

We gathered at 9.00 a.m. and focused on the tasks ahead. The venues had to be decorated appropriately. No difficult job at the UNPOL club, where we already had a strong presence. But there was also St. Columba's Church and the International Mess, which had to become “Irish” for the day.

A few short hours later, all was ready. Our distinguished visitor from home, Assistant Commissioner Dermot Jennings (seen amidst his blue-bereted colleagues in photo above) was, as we worked, being afforded the privilege of a Guard of Honour.

Families, friends and guests arriving at the church were ushered to their seats. Soon, the service got under way with “Cead Mile Failte Romhat”, a fine Irish welcome, sung in our native tongue to set the tone for the day. Father Kevin Price, of Irish stock of course, welcomed everyone and gave a brief rundown on the life and work of St. Patrick. Aileen Magner and Conor O'Neil, contingent members, then gave the readings.

Young Eve O'Connor proudly carried the shamrock to the altar for the blessing, head held high, bringing perhaps a tear to the eye of her proud father John, SCAT team leader at Pyla. Contingent Commander Supt. Galway then presented each contingent member with a sprig of shamrock pinned proudly on our lapels. Liam Lawton, Pyla, led us through the “Our Father” as *Gaeilge*. Finally, Father Price summed proceedings up with some tales of his Irish background and some tongue-in-cheek references to our traditional rivalry with our English neighbours. Amazing what you can get away with when you're a “man of the cloth”! Then our own four tenors, John O'Connor, Liam Lawton, Paul Curran and Jimmy Kelly, did us proud and sang gloriously as we exited the church.

As everyone made their way to the International Mess, the sky darkened a little but we kept our fingers crossed, confident our patron saint would not let us down. Irish coffees were already prepared for our guests, duly served by the men from the contingent. Kieran Dooley, Chargé d'Affaires at the Irish Embassy, got the formal proceedings underway, reading a St. Patrick's Day message from President Mary McAleese. Supt. Galway welcomed our guests. Formal proceedings were rounded off with a hearty rendition of the Irish National Anthem as Supt. Galway took the salute.

Traditional Irish dancing and music then followed, accompanied by festive food and drink. The “craic” was mighty, as they would say at home. As we eventually closed our eyes that night (or should it be next morning?), we smiled in satisfaction – another memorable “Paddy's Day”.

**Sgt. Jim McAllister**



St. Patrick's Day is celebrated worldwide with parades down streets decorated in green, white and gold. Rivers have been dyed green and even beer coloured green as a wonderful carnival atmosphere is created.

Naturally the major celebrations take place in Ireland, followed closely by the USA and UK. St. Patrick is credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland so the day normally starts with a religious ceremony. Legend also has it that St. Patrick cleared our island of snakes, a fair achievement for any saint. St. Patrick used the shamrock symbolically to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity to our forefathers, hence its association with the day's celebrations.

Many toasts and blessings celebrate the special significance of St. Patrick's Day. We shall end with two of them:

*May your glass be ever full,  
May the roof over your head be always strong,  
And may you be in heaven half an hour  
before the devil knows you're dead.*

*May you have the hindsight to know  
where you have been,  
The foresight to know where you are going,  
And the insight to know when you're  
going too far.*



## Diversity in the Sectors

Argentina is the largest contributor to UNFICYP with 295 military personnel, mainly based in Sector 1 but also located at the HQ/UNPA, UN Flight, MFR, FMPU and the Supply Group. However, there are not only Argentinians serving in Sector 1.

As a result of a formal invitation by Argentina to other South American countries, the Argentinian Contingent has in the past included soldiers from Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. Bolivia and Uruguay have since withdrawn, but Sector 1 still remains very much an integrated contingent.

### Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Peru in Sector 1

Brazil has been participating with UNFICYP since 1995; Paraguay since 1998; Chile since 2001 and Peru since 2002. Currently, Brazil and Chile provide one officer each as a MOLO, while Chile, Paraguay and Peru each provide one squad of 14 soldiers.

Although from the same continent, each country has a different way of life, habits and customs. The different latitudes, each with its own climate, vegetation, food and so on, impact on their respective and varied cultures.

I am LBdr. Kaumaitoya (aka Big Jim), one of eight Fijians deployed with 12th Regiment RA on their six-month tour of Cyprus.

When back in Sennelager, Germany, the crew of Fijians cover a wide range of roles within Regimental life, varying from HVM operator, HVM driver, REME technician and chef. Whilst in Cyprus, we all contribute towards the framework patrols that make up the basis of the tour.

### Fiji in Sector 2

When not working, the Fijian Contingent make a valuable contribution to the Regiment. All the male Fijians look forward to every weekend when they play a significant role in the rugby team's noticeable success, on and off island.

The Fijian Contingent also brings a taste of home life to Sector 2's social events, specifically the welcoming reception where we sang several typical Fijian songs, much to the enjoyment of all guests.

As our tour heads towards conclusion, we are looking forward to travelling home to Fiji to see our family and friends, some of whom we have not seen for a long time.

On the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding between the governments of Slovakia and Croatia, two Croat officers joined Sector 4 on 22 September 2005. Both are MOLO officers based in Camp Gen. Štefánik, where they serve alongside the 200 Slovak and Hungarian personnel of the Sector.

### Croatia in Sector 4

Maj. Vladimir Štimac is Commander of the Croatian Contingent. He is married to Sanja. This is his first mission, and he is held in high esteem by CO Sector 4. Maj. Štimac joined the Croatian armed forces in 1992 and has served as the chief of the Croatian Air Force HQ's IT Section.

Capt. Zoran Sabolovic is the second member of the Croatian Contingent. Capt. Sabolovic, who has a law degree, joined the armed forces in 1991. Since then, he has gained a wealth of experience in the Croatian army which he uses for the benefit not only Sector 4 but for the mission as a whole. He is married to Tatjana and they have a son, Arian, and a daughter, Iris.



*Chile: SSgt. José Vivar Hermosilla  
Paraguay: Cpl. First Class Lugo Vidal  
Peru: Cpl. Demetrio Quispe Calcina  
Brazil: Capt. Alexandre Dos Passos*

Therefore, when the soldiers mingle with each other, they have to adapt. Strong historical links and (for most) a common language (Brazilians speak Portuguese, not Spanish) helps greatly when it comes to forging a common work environment.

Encouraging tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures and peoples, Sector 1 carries out its peacekeeping duties, promoting international peace and security within an integrated contingent. This makes the Argentinian Task Force an example of tolerance, diversity and open-mindedness.



*Presentation of the Nicosia seven-a-side rugby competition winner's trophy by the COS to “Big Jim” on 7 March*



*Second left: Capt. Zoran Sabolovic  
Far right: Maj. Vladimir Štimac*

Both our Croatian members are really proud to serve Sector 4 and to fly the Croatian flag in UNFICYP.



# Let Ordinary Citizens Speak Out Against “Ordinary” Intolerance

On 21 March 1960, police in apartheid South Africa fired on a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville protesting racially discriminatory laws. Dozens of protestors died and many more were wounded. In commemorating the anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, we

**“We must not tolerate the creeping rot of routine discrimination”**

not only remember the lives that were lost, but draw attention to the broader suffering inflicted by racial discrimination worldwide.

The focus of this year’s commemoration, “Fighting Everyday Discrimination”, challenges us to take meaningful steps

to fight commonplace discriminatory practices in our societies. We are all aware that many of man’s greatest atrocities have had racial under-pinnings, but the collective toll inflicted by routine racism is frequently overlooked. Indeed, the edifices of humanity’s most horrific crimes have often been built on the foundations of banal bigotry.

From name-calling in schools to hiring and firing decisions in the workplace, from selective media or police coverage of crimes to unequal provision of government services, the mistreatment of racial or ethnic groups not only abounds in our societies, but often passes unchallenged. That such everyday racism remains prevalent is undeniable. But for it to pass unchallenged is unconscionable.

We must not tolerate the creeping rot of routine discrimination. Nor can we resign ourselves to it as a regrettable attribute of human nature. None of us is born to hate. Intolerance is taught and can be untaught. Legal guarantees are a fundamental part of this fight. But education must be its vanguard. Education can foster awareness and cultivate tolerance. It should begin at home – where, after all, many racist attitudes have their origin – continue in school, and become integral to our public discourse. In this struggle against intolerance, citizens must simultaneously be teachers and students.

The United Nations, through its awareness programmes, international law making and rights monitoring roles, has an important part to play. But all of us need to join this battle. On this International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, let us reaffirm that ultimate success in this struggle rests with ordinary citizens speaking out against “ordinary” intolerance. It is they who must refuse to tolerate discriminatory acts in their daily lives. It is they who must ensure that there is nothing “everyday” about discrimination. And it is they who will benefit the most from communities built on rights and respects for all.

*SG on International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination: 21 March*

**“None of us is born to hate. Intolerance is taught and can be untaught.”**

## Day of Solidarity with Detained Staff Members

The 21st annual International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members was observed on 24 March to draw attention to the staff members who have been arrested, detained, abducted or “disappeared” while in UN service.

The Day marks the abduction by armed men, in 1985, near Beirut Airport, of Alec Collett, on assignment for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The fate of Mr. Collett, a former journalist and Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Ghana, has never been determined.

Staff are reminded that donations can be made to

the Scholarship Fund of the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA), which benefits the children of those killed in the service of the UN.

At least 43 staff members of the UN family of organisations are under arrest or detention or are missing, according to the Secretary-General’s latest report on the issue. In February, 27 national staff working for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) were arrested by the Eritrean authorities for varying durations, and in March militia groups kidnapped two staff members in Somalia.

## Malloch Brown Succeeds Louise Fréchette as Deputy SG

Secretary-General Kofi Annan has appointed Mark Malloch Brown to succeed Louise Fréchette as Deputy Secretary-General. Ms. Fréchette stepped down as of 31 March having served eight years as the UN’s first ever Deputy SG, the most senior woman in the organisation’s history.

Paying tribute, the SG said she had worked tirelessly for a more coherent and effective UN on subjects ranging from HIV/AIDs to our relationship with civil society. He applauded

her “indefatigable efforts” for reform of the organisation, and her “unstinting faith” in its ability to keep changing for the better.

Mark Malloch Brown has served as Chef de Cabinet since January 2005. In that position, he has worked closely with the SG and Deputy SG on all aspects of UN work, including helping to set out an ambitious reform agenda for the UN, much of which was endorsed by world leaders at the World Summit in New York last September.



## Force Commander Lt. Gen. Rafael José Barni Arrives

Force Commander Lt. Gen. Rafael José Barni arrived on island on 5 March. Landing at Larnaca Airport, he was greeted by Chief of Staff Col. Peter Fraser-Hopewell.

The next day, the new FC “signed on” at UNFICYP HQ after inspecting a guard of honour. Since then, he has been on the go, touring the buffer zone, making calls, inspecting the sectors and in general familiarizing himself with UNFICYP’s personnel and range of responsibilities.



Sector 1



Sector 2



Sector 4





# Environmental Issues

## Water and Culture

The theme of this year's World Water Day, "Water and Culture", served as a reminder that water is not only essential for life – it is also a wide-ranging cultural presence. It is an inspiration for artists, a focus of scientific research, and an indispensable element in the religious rituals of many traditions and faiths.

Despite its importance and often sacred nature, water continues to be wasted and degraded all over the world, in cities and rural areas alike. Eighteen per cent of the world's population lack access to safe drinking water, and 40% lack basic sanitation. Every day, some 6,000 people, most of them children, die from water-related causes.

**"Every day, some 6,000 people, most of them children, die from water-related causes"**

That is why the General Assembly resolution, proclaiming the period 2005 to 2015 as the International Decade for Action ("Water for Life"), called for more concerted action to reach the internationally agreed targets for access to water and sanitation.

The GA also stressed the need to involve women in all water-related development efforts. In many cultures, including indigenous societies, women are the guardians of water. They often spend long, arduous hours searching for and carrying water, when they could – and should – be involved in decision-making on how water is used and managed.

This year's observance of World Water Day also marked the launch of the second edition of the World Water Development Report (<http://www.unesco.org/>

[water/wwap/wwdr2/table\\_contents.html](http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr2/table_contents.html)), produced by the UN system's World Water Assessment Programme.

The SG, in his World Water Day message, has urged us all to "recognize" the cultural, environmental and economic importance of clean water, and to "strengthen" our efforts to protect rivers, lakes and aquifers. We need to distribute water more equitably, and increase the efficiency of water use, especially in agriculture. Let us mount a sustained effort – among international bodies, governments and local communities, and across traditions and cultures – that will reach our goals."



*Kouris Dam, the largest in Cyprus, capable of containing 115 million cubic metres of water, now stands at just over half full. In March 2005, the level stood at 83.5%.*

## Spare a Thought, Save a Drought

The heavy showers experienced towards the end of March in Nicosia were welcome respite from the dry weather conditions experienced this winter but did little to dent the low levels in the island's dams. Rainfall this season remains well below the average and water flow into the island's dams is under half their capacity.

Phedros Roussis, Senior Technician of the Cyprus Water Development Department, said currently the island's dams are at 49% capacity with 135.5 million cubic metres of water compared to the same period the previous year which had 213 million cubic metres of water.

This year's water flow stands at 20.9 million cubic metres of water, the second worst water flow since the biggest dam, the Kouris, was built in 1987.

He pointed out that the Ministry of Agriculture has already announced water cuts for irrigation purposes with only 47% of farming demands being met.

For now, restrictions on domestic water usage have been avoided. However, an advisory has been issued that the public should use water wisely and sparingly, especially during the summer months.

Significant amounts of water can be saved year-round by following these water saving measures:

- Check plumbing for leaks.
- Check taps for drips and repair promptly.
- Install plastic water bags in toilet flush tanks.
- Take a shower, not a bath; don't run water until it's hot; turn shower off when soaping.
- Tell children not to mess around with water in the bath, garden or anywhere else.
- Turn off water while you shave and/or brush teeth.
- Wash only full loads in the washing and dish washing machines.
- Water garden with watering can early morning or evening when evaporation is limited.
- Wash car with sponge and bucket (hosepipe is prohibited by law).
- Use broom, not hose, to clean verandas and pavements (hosepipe is prohibited by law).

## The Buffer Zone is Not a Rubbish Dump



**Sector 1**

The buffer zone, as SRSg Møller remarked just a month ago, is "our place of business". This is why, supported by the UN family of agencies on the island and working in tandem with the communities, UNFICYP continues to promote the return of normal conditions in an area that exists between unresolved cease-fire lines separating two opposing military forces.



**Sector 4**

We know the dramatic impact the opening of crossing points have had on the island's day-to-day life and we have seen how de-mining has facilitated this and how it has opened up new lands in the buffer zone to the farming community.

These are excellent examples of what can be accomplished through cooperation between the UN, the EU and the two communities.



**Sector 2**

However, as evidenced from the accompanying photographs, there are always those among us who show little respect for landscape and environment. Too often, our patrols encounter eyesores in the buffer zone that are used by an anti-social few as sites where they indiscriminately dump rubbish.

As can clearly be seen from the photos, this is not casual littering by a careless few. Those using these sites are repeat offenders who systematically deposit waste and garbage in the buffer zone.

Measures are being taken by UNFICYP patrols to contain and restrain these dumpsters. The violators show no respect for buffer zone regulations and even less consideration for the environmental landscape.

## Towards Normalcy

The Mine Action Centre (MAC) continues in its efforts to clear the island's undetonated mines located within the United Nations buffer zone.



*Working under harsh conditions*



*Media from both communities viewing the holding area on 7 March*

So far, in excess of 900,000 square metres of land have been freed through these actions. Twenty of the estimated 48 minefields have been cleared. The EU-funded effort is releasing buffer zone land previously held hostage by the threat of mines back to community use, whether for farming or by paving the way for new crossings.



# SPEED AND SAFETY ATTITUDE COUNTS

The speed at which you drive is one of the most important factors in determining your risk of having an accident. The faster you go, the less chance you have of taking avoiding action, and the greater your risk of having an accident. Speed is largely a matter of choice. Occasions when it is absolutely necessary to drive fast are fairly limited. Good driving requires that you drive at a speed suitable and safe for the conditions.

## Attitudes to risk-taking

There is always some degree of risk associated with driving because it involves moving a large heavy object at relatively high speeds, but a driver's attitude can greatly influence the risk involved. Mindsets that don't help:

- Enjoying the thrill of danger
- Enjoying impressing passengers or other drivers
- Disregarding personal safety
- The illusion of control, or overestimating your ability
- Justifying risks because they are taken in a noble cause
- It's not your vehicle

## Safety

Speed has a major impact on safety. International evidence clearly shows that lower speed limits result in fewer accidents. At greater speeds the risks obviously increase; you approach hazards faster, you have less time to react, and impact damage is greater. A child hit by a car at 32 kmph may be injured but will probably live; a child hit at 56 kmph will probably die. There is an inherent risk in speed but whatever your speed, if it is inappropriate in the circumstances, **it is dangerous.**

Always drive so that you are able to stop safely on your own side of the road in the distance you can see to be clear. This rule identifies the maximum speed at which it is safe to drive. It requires you to take into account all the circumstances before deciding the appropriate speed and to adjust your speed as circumstances alter. Capabilities of driver and vehicle, prevailing road, traffic and weather conditions and, in addition, other road users must all be taken into consideration.

## The vehicle

Different vehicles have different handling characteristics. When you drive an unfamiliar vehicle allow yourself time to get used to its controls and handling characteristics before driving long distances. Allow an extra safety margin until you are confident about how the vehicle will respond.

## Road, weather and traffic conditions

When you adapt your speed to the prevailing circumstances you must anticipate and plan for potential as well as actual dangers. This principle underlies all aspects of "defensive driving".

## Speed limits

Statutory speed limits set the maximum permissible speed, but this is not the same thing as a safe speed. The safe speed for a particular stretch of road is determined by the conditions at the time. In winter, at night, where there is low visibility or high traffic volume,

the statutory speed limit may well be excessive. The onus is always on the driver to select a speed appropriate for the conditions.

## How speed affects the driver

As you drive faster, the nearest point at which you can accurately focus moves away from you. Foreground detail becomes blurred and observation becomes more difficult because you have to process more information in less time. The only way to cope with this is to scan further ahead, so that you gain more time to assess, plan and react.

## Underestimating speed

It is easy to underestimate the speed at which you are driving. Speed perception is complicated and depends on several factors such as:

- The difference in detail perceived by your forward and side vision
- Engine, road and wind noise
- Unevenness of the ride
- What you regard as a normal speed
- How wide the road is
- Your height off the ground

Alterations to any of these factors can alter your perception of speed. The list that follows gives some common situations where speed perception can be distorted. The solution is simple: adjust your speed by checking your speedometer regularly.

- When you have been travelling at high speed on a motorway or other fast road and then transfer to roads where speeds below 50 and 65 kmph are appropriate, these slower speeds will seem much slower than they really are. Allow time for normal speed perception to return.
- When visibility is low, in fog, sleet, heavy rain and at night, speed perception becomes distorted and it is easy to drive faster than you realise.
- When driving a vehicle that is smoother, quieter or more powerful than your usual vehicle, it is easy to drive too fast. As well as sight and balance, you use other senses to assess speed; road noise, engine noise and vibration all play a part. When one or more of these is reduced, it can seem that you are going slower than you really are.
- On wide-open roads, speeds will seem slower than on small confined roads.

## Key safety points

- Do not drive at speed unless you are competent and it is safe to do so.
- Be familiar with the controls and the handling characteristics of your vehicle; use the controls smoothly.
- Always drive so that you can stop within the distance you can see to be clear, by day or by night.
- If you double your speed, you quadruple your braking distance.
- No patrol or emergency is so great that it justifies an accident.

**It is far better to arrive late than not at all!**



# Honouring Gerry O'Sullivan

blue beret on the island since 1964".

In August 1974, Gerry O'Sullivan had been the newly arrived Chief Economic Officer of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). From day one, he was plunged into having

adding that "in bestowing this decoration on Gerry O'Sullivan, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, recognizes, through him, the great service, contribution and support Ireland has offered to Cyprus, its people and the efforts to find a just and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem".

He pointed out that Ireland's participation in UNFICYP, through an infantry group from 1964 to 1973 and subsequently with officers and NGOs, had totalled nearly 10,000 personnel, including two Force Commanders. This contribution "is a shining example of Ireland's sincere interest and solidarity", the Minister said. The people of Cyprus feel indebted and "deeply appreciative", he added.

"All I can do is to say thank you Gerry from the bottom of my heart on behalf of the thousands of refugees and enclaved persons whose lives you touched in difficult circumstances."

Today, Ireland continues to contribute to the UN presence in Cyprus through the participation of its Garda Siochana in UNPOL.



*Lt. Gen. Gerry O'Sullivan with admiring granddaughter and grandson*

On 21 March Cypriot Foreign Minister George Iacovou awarded Irish Lt. Gen. Gerry O'Sullivan the Grand Commander of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Cyprus on behalf of President Papadopoulos in Dublin.

The Foreign Minister paid tribute to an Irishman "who served in Cyprus with great distinction and who is held in the highest esteem by the people of Cyprus", while acknowledging "all those Irish men and women who have worn the

to cope with the grave humanitarian situation on the ground.

"The respect and admiration that I have for Gerry, having seen him in action first hand, is mirrored in the many real human stories that Cypriots, who came in direct contact with him or who were helped directly by him or his actions, would recount if they were here today", Foreign Minister Iacovou noted.

The Minister referred to Ireland's solidarity with the people of Cyprus,

# Taking the Plunge!

The Dolphin Swimming Pool opened at 11.00 a.m. on 29 March with Col. Peter Fraser-Hopewell, COMBRITCON, taking the plunge, dutifully accompanied by Pool Chairman, CPLO Lt. Col. Alex Boyd, who bravely demonstrated the technique required to enter the pool from the newly installed slide. Although primarily for the children, the slide can accommodate all ages.

Surprisingly, despite the pool not being heated, it was not a severe experience or shock to the system and the sun soon warmed the extremities once out. Be brave, take the plunge and enjoy the season!

Additional improvements this year include a new beach volleyball court, more gymnasium equipment, table tennis and a refurbished refreshments area. Also coming is a widescreen television with a BFBS facility to enjoy the normal "soaps" and football matches. No excuses now for not relaxing at the pool in case you are going to miss your favourite programme. No doubt the Football World Cup will be an attraction with this enhancement.

If all these improvements were not enough, the ticket prices have also all been reduced across the range with new season tickets coming on stream this year. An example is the single monthly at **€10.00** or **€50.00** for the season until November. All tickets with new prices are available at the



*Col. Peter Fraser-Hopewell and Lt. Col. Alex Boyd taking the first plunge of the season*

Swimming Pool Ticket Office, so don't delay and miss out on the good weather. The restaurant is now open throughout the season. So, even if swimming is not at the top of your agenda, treat the family to a meal at extremely good rates or organise a party!





## Inspection of CMP Site

German Ambassador to Cyprus, Dr. Rolf Kaiser, and Ms. Susanne Kröger, Head of the Cyprus Desk of the German Federal Foreign Office, inspected ongoing work at the site of the Committee of Missing Persons (CMP) future Anthropological Laboratory near the old international airport at the UNPA, in Nicosia, during the month. The Federal Republic of Germany has contributed €100,000 towards the building of the laboratory.

*Photo shows from left: CMP Greek Cypriot member Elias Georgiades, Turkish Cypriot member Ms. Gülden Plümer Küçük, Ms. Kröger and Ambassador Kaiser, and Assistant to the third member of the CMP Ms. Jennifer Wright.*

## Aussie Entertainment

James Blundell, well known Australian country music singer, ARIA winner and nine times Golden Guitar award winner, recently led a troupe that performed at the Ledra Palace Hotel for members and colleagues of the Australian Federal Police serving with UNFICYP.

The show also featured fellow country music singer Rebecca Lavelle, the beautiful voice behind each track on the songs from the popular Australian TV series "McLeod's Daughters".

Wayne Deakin, a Melbourne

comedian who tours extensively throughout Australia and has performed at the Montreal Comedy Festival, talked a blue streak literally and kept the audience in stitches. The surprise guest performer was AFP member Jason Striegheer, a man of many talents!

The party travelled to Cyprus after entertaining Australian soldiers serving with the Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai Peninsula. The show also featured Forces Advisory Council on Entertainment (FACE).



*Darren and Sue with James Blundell*

## Looking Back at Blue Berets

The wealth of nations that have served with UNFICYP over the years is reflected in the pages of the **Blue Beret**, which has recorded not only the

### March 1996

Thousands of peacekeepers have served in Cyprus over the years, some longer than others, but few have managed to collect 35 UN medals for an impressive 17.5 years of service. WO1 Werner Müller, who served with the Austrian Contingent, made history with UNFICYP when he became the longest ever serving military member of UNFICYP and possibly any other peacekeeping operation. His career came to an end on 11 March 1996 when he departed from the mission.



arrival and departure of their peacekeepers but how the family of nations that make up the United Nations have left their imprint on the island.

### March 1986

The 3rd Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment commenced its second tour of duty in Cyprus after a nine-year absence. The 3rd Battalion, equipped and trained as a mechanized infantry battalion, served in Cyprus from October 1976 to April 1977. Photo shows Battalion members on pre-departure parade in Canada.



## New Faces

Juana Clough (Bostock) arrived in UNFICYP on 16 February 2006, taking up the post as Personal Assistant to Chief of Mission Michael Möller. Although she is new to the island, she had worked with the SRSG in New York, so from a career perspective, Juana was familiar with her departmental head!

A native New Yorker, Juana is proud of her Indonesian and Filipina heritage. She is also a musical talent, playing the piano from the age of four and the violin since she was 11. No wonder she attended the renowned "Fame" high school in New York!



She joined the UN in 1988 before starting college, and decided to stay with the organisation. Her assignments range from stints with General Services through the Office of Human Resources Management, DPKO, Office of the PRSG for Southern Lebanon and the Executive Office of the SG.

Juana is accompanied by husband Allen, son, Jalen (13), and Fletcher (3), a six-pound Yorkshire Terrier and the best guard dog in the world!

Juana's interests include reading, motorcycles and MotoGP, foreign/independent films and the beach.



Reason for coming to Cyprus? Spending quality time with family and friends.

Arto Haroutian, an Armenian Cypriot who hails from Nicosia, left Cyprus in 1976 for Australia.

28 years later, having studied and trained in Sydney, he returned to the island. During his time "down under", he worked for the state telecommunications carrier Telstra for 22 years as a senior technical officer.

On 1 December 2005, Arto joined the Communications Unit of CITS (the Communications and Information Technology Section) as a telecommunications technician.

Arto enjoys travelling – at home and abroad.



Mehmet Metin Hasan started working in the Engineering Section as a Pest Controller on 22 February. Following in the footsteps of his father, Hasan Mehmet, who retired on 31 January this year, he regularly visits all locations in UNFICYP in his day-to-day attempt to keep the buffer zone free from infection.

Mehmet comes from Nicosia, and worked for a construction company before taking up the post in UNFICYP. He speaks Turkish and a little Greek, and is currently taking English lessons three times a week.

Mehmet is married to Nazli and

Marina Pekri took up the position of Finance Clerk in the Vendor's Unit on 13 February this year.

Marina, who comes from Nicosia, left Cyprus on finishing school to study mathematics in Athens. She has now embarked on a Master's course in Business Administration at Intercollege, specialising in finance.

Marina's hobbies include music, cinema, trips and all kinds of sport.

they have a son, Hasan Jan (7) and a daughter, Hatice Zeray. In his free time, Mehmet enjoys hunting (in season and outside the buffer zone, of course) and football.

## Thanks, Goodbye, Good Luck



March is the season of rotations and re-assignment and this year was no exception. A "Mega Mug Out" was held on 24 March in the International Club for 10 stalwarts who contributed greatly to UNFICYP during their time in Cyprus. From the left: Maj. K. Storn, Lt. Col. V. Nuñez, Maj. S. Várvoigyi, Capt. P. Fajcik, Maj. M. Young, Maj. M. Kukuk, Capt. L. Rodriguez, Capt. L. Filippi, Lt. Mujica and Capt. K. Ugo. UNFICYP wishes them all the very best in the future.



# Helicopter in a Box

Since UNFICYP downsized in 2005 into a more mobile and flexible force, its buffer zone patrols still had to cover the same amount of territory. Observation from OPs was severely reduced when manpower was cut. The buffer zone did not shrink, so operations demanded greater mobility and flexibility. Foot patrols and vehicle patrols were reinforced by helicopter monitoring of the buffer zone.

Up until recently, UN Flight consisted of one Bell 212 and one Hughes 500, both used mainly for patrolling purposes, but also for MEDEVACs, exercises, etc. They carried out 90 flying hours per month, 45 for the Bell and 45 for the Hughes. The Bell 212 is a much larger helicopter seating up to 13 crew and passengers, and consequently, costs a lot more to run and maintain than the Hughes 500 which seats four.

The decision was to augment UN Flight's helicopter capacity by one additional Hughes 500, capable of carrying out patrolling duties, but at a much reduced cost. It also serves to maintain availability of one helicopter at all times for increased operational duties and time spent on maintenance and inspection.

Therefore, on 9 February, one Hughes 500 was added to UNFICYP's helicopter family. It arrived by truck at its new home in the hangar, having spent one month in a huge container, travelling to Cyprus from Argentina over land and sea.

UN Flight's technicians are not only qualified to maintain and inspect helicopters, but also to assemble them. Therefore, within two hours, it was possible to fit together all parts of the new Hughes 500 and make it ready for flight. However, being very conscious that safety is of paramount importance, and fully aware of the outstanding record UN Flight holds over the last 13 years, the technicians opted to give it a full reception inspection as well. It was finally ready to fly one week later.

Although overall flying hours have increased to a total of 110 per month, the Bell 212 now undertakes only 40 hours per month, and the two Hughes 500 take on the main bulk of patrolling duties with 70 hours per month.

The LOA (Letter of Assist), defining all helicopter regulations and insurance issues, is now finalized and the new Hughes is a very welcomed member of the UN Flight family.



March 2006 - The Blue Beret

# Danish Veterans Return to Cyprus



Chief of Mission SRSG Michael Møller was joined by Force Commander Lt.Gen. Rafael José Barni when the CM's proud countrymen came to UNFICYP HQ to pay their respects.



On 23 March, a party of DANCON veterans and family members visited Camp Roca. These former Danish peacekeepers (both military and police) included veterans who had served at different times during the Danish presence on the island from 1964 to 1992, initially in central Cyprus and subsequently in Sector 1.

They arrived at Xeros, home of Camp Roca (formerly DANCON's Camp Viking between 1970 and 1992) and marched proudly to the parade square, followed by their families.

They placed a wreath at the plaque that commemorates DANCON presence in the camp (see photo left). Afterwards they broke ranks and visited the facilities. Many commented that the facilities are almost unchanged since the old days, and they complimented the Argentinian Task Force for maintaining them in such excellent condition.

Before leaving, the visitors were invited to the new NCO Mess where refreshments were served. They left Camp Roca after reliving their experiences in UNFICYP, and also meeting their successors.

## Visits to UNFICYP



Croatian Foreign Minister Mrs. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic greets the Honour Guard on her arrival at UNFICYP Headquarters, 3 March



SRSG Michael Møller presents Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen with a plaque to mark his visit to UNFICYP Headquarters, 16 March