



De-miners on display



The Blue Beret

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Making
Cyprus
Mine-free

THE BLUE BERET

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International Peacekeepers' Day

As we near the fourth observance of the International Day of UN Peacekeepers (celebrated this year on 31 May), almost 90,000 personnel serve with 18 DPKO-led peace operations on four continents. This represents a 50% increase in staffing numbers compared to two years ago, reflecting new and continuing demands for UN peacekeeping.

Indeed, the spate of new missions that began in 2004 continues to place huge strains on UN resources. The annual budget for peacekeeping now tops \$5 billion. The universality of UN peacekeeping has never been more evident. Today, more member states than ever before – 108 in all – contribute troops and police to UN peacekeeping missions.

As of end March, 88,297 men and women were serving as UN peacekeepers – 71,559 of them military and civilian police personnel; 4,880 international civilians; 10,227 local civilians; and 1,631 United Nations Volunteers. More than 78% of all peacekeepers serve in Africa, where most of today's peacekeeping occurs.

It comes as no surprise that UN peacekeepers risk their lives and that some make the ultimate sacrifice. Sadly, last year, 126 peacekeepers, uniformed and civilian, lost their lives in the service of peace, the highest casualty toll in any one year in the last decade. In the first four months of this year, another 12 died.

After almost 60 years of experience in the field, UN peacekeeping remains an indispensable tool for the member states in tackling threats to international peace and security.

This year, Cambodia and Timor-Leste joined the list of countries that once hosted peacekeeping missions and which now contribute troops and police to UN efforts elsewhere. Others include Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia (both contribute police to this mission), Guatemala, Namibia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone.

Certainly, in the case of Cyprus, the island's exposure to UNFICYP has made it familiar with the sensitivities and intricacies that are part and parcel of the painstaking peacekeeping process and with the professionalism and pride UNFICYP's peacekeepers have brought to their demanding task since 1964. Hopefully, after all those years, the day is approaching when a Cyprus settlement will allow a similar transition here from host to troop contributing country.

Promoting Mine Awareness in the Buffer Zone

April 4th was the first-ever International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. It marked the launch of a new international initiative to help sustain efforts to end the scourge of landmines and, particularly significant for this mission, the drive to make more countries, Cyprus included, mine-free.

UNFICYP and the Mine Action Centre chose to mark the day on 5 April. This gave Chief of Mission Michael Møller the chance to invite representatives of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political parties to join him and members of the diplomatic community to observe a special demonstration of de-mining techniques. The chosen staging area was a site next to the historic Venetian walls of old Nicosia, inside the buffer zone, a mere 100 metres away from the Ledra Palace Hotel. The SRSg had been the guest of the monthly meeting of the political party leaders, hosted each month by the Slovak Embassy at Ledra Palace.

Before Mick Raine, head of the MAC, put the team of de-miners and their dogs through their paces in front of the assembled politicians, diplomats, and media plus a balcony-full of interested north Nicosians who looked down from atop the wall, the CM stressed the message of the day that "landmines have no place in any civilized society".

He noted how these invisible killers can lie silently in the ground for decades, and how a single landmine – even fear of its presence – can hold an entire community hostage. In post-conflict societies, landmines can prevent farmers from growing crops, and, generally, remain a major obstacle to rebuilding and renewal, he observed.

The 1997 Ottawa Convention bans anti-personnel landmines and 150 countries have signed it to date, a sure sign of the moral revulsion with which these weapons are viewed. Today, governments, donors, NGOs and the UN are cooperating in efforts to tackle the landmine problem in more than 30 countries, one of which is Cyprus.

The CM hoped the demonstration of de-mining techniques would help spur an even more determined effort on the part of both communities to rid the island completely of its lethal landmine heritage. In the case of Cyprus, this was a goal that could be attained in a matter of years, he said, noting that "each mine cleared brings us one step closer to building the conditions for lasting and productive peace".

Already, the de-mining effort in Cyprus had cleared the way for new crossings, enabling the two communities to move about more freely, and opening up new opportunities for trade and commerce. The task that lies ahead is to focus on the remaining minefields, both inside and outside the buffer zone.

"But for that we need the resources to complete the job so well begun. Because if this work is to continue, ridding the buffer zone of mines will take an estimated 6 million euros more, while a further 5 million euros is required to achieve the ultimate goal of a mine-free Cyprus."

Appealing to the many representatives of the donor community gathered at the event, CM Møller commented that this seemed "a small price to pay for the satisfaction of supporting so worthwhile and historic an objective".

Turning to the political party representatives, he hoped their presence "serves to endorse not only the need for awareness of the landmine problem but more importantly promotes the aim of making Cyprus a mine-free landmark".



The EU-funded de-mining programme is implemented by UNDP, executed by UNOPS, with technical assistance from United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and operations facilitated by UNFICYP. The EU has contributed funding to the tune of 4 million euros for 2004-2006, while Canada and Slovenia made pre-launch contributions of US\$250,000 and US\$25,000 respectively to help get the Mine Action Centre (MAC) up and running.

MAC was established in October 2004 and began mine clearance on 19 November 2004 when de-mining activities began in the National Guard minefields. Pending second phase renewal, work in the NG minefields was completed in July 2005. Work began in the Turkish Forces minefields the following August and is ongoing.

To date, MAC's de-mining activities have released more than 1 million square metres of buffer zone land, making it available for agricultural and other civil use. In the process, 22 of the 51 minefields in the buffer zone have been cleared of landmines.

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Oyez Oyez ...

UNFICYP's First Town Hall Meeting

Chief of Mission, SRSG Michael Møller, hosted the mission's first ever "Town Hall" meeting on 6 April to brief staff on the mission's latest initiatives and to explain the SG's reform proposals.

He said he would like to hold quarterly gatherings to interact regularly with all staff. "Each one of you is the face of the UN on the island and it is important to have the same message, especially now that we are embarking on a new process we hope to succeed in," he said.

Referring to the political developments on the island, the CM said: "As you may have read in the press, the SG has in the past two years said the situation is not right for the resumption of his Good Offices. Although a fully-fledged initiative is not being undertaken, it is clear to both sides that we cannot sit on our hands and do nothing. We have embarked on an initiative to restore some of the trust lost over the last two years in as depoliticized a manner as possible.

"Each one of you is the face of the UN on the island and it is important to have the same message, especially now that we are embarking on a new process we hope to succeed in."

"That is why we have suggested technical talks where I have suggested ten topics which are not etched in stone. Both sides have agreed in principle. Of course, they have conditions before starting negotiations which are currently being discussed. Clearly, the pace cannot be determined by us." Mr. Møller said the intention was for

agreement on the technical level framework so that work could start on other issues that form part of the comprehensive solution. "This way, if we embark on a Good Offices venture again in the future, we will be well prepared and it will be well timed," he said. The CM stressed that it is clear Cyprus cannot afford another failure. "The Cyprus problem needs a Cypriot solution. The two communities must sit and negotiate a solution so that it can take root for years to come," he said.

Turning back to the "Town Hall" concept, the CM said he intends to institute regular meetings so that everyone is involved and kept up-to-date with what is happening. "If you have any ideas or suggestions that are outside your area of work, please come forward. You are a valuable resource that we should use more than we have done in the past."

Referring to the SG's reform proposals, the CM said that over the last 10-to-15 years, the organisation has turned into a field-based operation. "We have more people in the field than in the Secretariat building in New York," he said. Unfortunately, the rules and regulations have not changed to meet these new needs. "This reform process and proposal which is before the member states is a response to that very stark fact. We are simply not equipped well enough to implement the mandates that are given to us, with the speed that they are given to us, and with the very meagre resources at our disposal."

With the expansion of the UN's tasks and outputs, the organisation now has over 80,000 peacekeepers and a lot more people supporting them, particularly in the field and at headquarters. However, the ratio between headquarters support staff and peacekeepers is incredibly small compared to how armies are serviced by their respective ministries of defence and headquarters back in their countries. Despite the increase in the number of staff and the increase in resources, "we

are still an organisation that delivers an incredible amount of work for very little money," he noted. In early 2000, the UN budget was less than that of the New York Fire Department.

Today, there are almost twice as many staff in the field as at headquarters. It was gratifying to note that we are now proposing reforms to member states in terms of staff mobility and training with opportunities for experienced staff to move forward in their careers including general service national and field staff.

The organisation was not functioning as it should, "if we really want to start delivering on the tasks we have been given," especially when compared to how other organisations in the public sphere have adapted. "The world has changed tremendously, and we haven't changed fast enough."

The problems we face and must deal with now are global problems that transcend borders and transcend the ability of any one government when it comes to dealing with them. This is true in health, crime prevention, environmental issues and economic issues. In order to remain relevant as an organisation that can help governments and society deal with these issues, we must also adapt.

"The enormous amount of experience and expertise gathered in the UN family must be harnessed in such a way that we optimise our ability to deliver and share that knowledge so that it is put to use in the most effective way."

The CM then handed over to Senior Adviser Susan Allee, who referred to the "people section" of the reform report, the main thrust of which is to improve the work of the Secretariat and the organisation as a whole. However, she pointed out that it was inaccurate to describe the report as "just a cost-cutting measure". Some proposals would "actually cost money up front," she said. "For example, investing in people and addressing some shortcomings in staff recruitment, plus support for career development."

One aim is to ease the path from general service to professional grades and to bring the Secretariat more into line with other field-based organisations like UNDP and UNHCR, she said. These organisations and agencies have mandatory mobility, something those holding headquarters posts for years and seeking to remain there while getting promoted are particularly resistant to.

"I think it is good news for field-based personnel that mobility will be encouraged and valued. They are also trying to introduce more mobility for general service staff, although the trend in the GA is to restrict general service mobility, so it will be interesting to see how this develops."

Turning to career development, Ms. Allee said the important thing was to offer people "real" opportunities. Much was available on paper, and there was a range of training courses in the field, especially for technical staff. The issue is "getting the time, getting your manager's support for career development, making sure that career opportunities are disseminated widely throughout the organisation instead of the handpicked few that would be known to the upper level managers".

As Chairperson of the Staff Field Service Union Committee in UNFICYP, Ross Wickware then spoke about proposals for greater investment in leadership, noting how, under the current system, too many report directly to the SG, and how the post of Deputy Secretary-General created in 1997, has no statutory authority. "In addition, the organisation plans to develop middle and senior

management capabilities from within the organisation, which I think we will agree is a positive step."

On the technology front, Wickware said the current system is fragmented, outdated and under-funded, resulting in the inability to store, search and retrieve information quickly. "The proposal is to upgrade to a new and integrated system with a new Chief Information Officer, charged with preparing a comprehensive information management strategy. By 2009, the plan is to consolidate this into a network-wide series of applications so that we, the workers, can actually use them."

"People are the single and most valuable asset."

Returning to the microphone, Chief of Mission Møller concluded the session by pointing out that the entire UN system needed to adjust – not only the UN and DPKO – "and that includes us here at UNFICYP", he said.

"If the member states agree to the SG's reforms, then I think the next three-to-five years will be quite exciting. I think it is particularly interesting for staff in the field. I was part of the first team that started looking at the mobility issue because it had become clear to us that there was an enormous amount of experience and expertise out in the field that had never been tapped into. I saw it when I was working in the Department of

Political Affairs at the time and it always puzzled me why the people sitting doing the political analysis had very little contact with the people who actually knew what they were talking about in the countries where the problem was. I was even more surprised that we did not have a system that would bring that expertise to headquarters and a system that could send out the people pushing papers in headquarters to see what the real world looked like and learn from it. This programme here is hopefully going to adjust that and give some interesting opportunities for primarily field-based people. If they are to be efficient, they also need to know how headquarters works in order to interact better in political services."

A psychological mapping of the UN indicated that "80% of us are change-resistant and are more comfortable with things as they are," the CM said. The best way to deal with this mindset is to talk about it. That's why he is keen to maintain this dialogue.

Netha Kreouzou



GA takes a different line on reform process

Abandoning its customary consensus mechanism, the Fifth Committee moved to a vote recommending that the General Assembly (GA) take a different approach to the SG's management reform package (discussed in the Town Hall meeting above). As a result, the GA endorsed the Committee's draft recommendations (121 in favour, 50 against, two abstentions).

The GA reaffirmed its oversight role and that of the Fifth Committee in administrative and budgetary matters, and stressed that setting the UN's priorities was the prerogative of member states. It reaffirmed the GA's role in carrying out a thorough analysis and approval of the human and financial resources and policies. It also highlighted the importance of strengthened accountability in the organisation and of ensuring the SG's greater accountability to member states.

On behalf of the Group of 77 developing countries and China, which had initially sponsored the draft, the representative of South Africa insisted the GA resolution did not in any way delay or prevent UN reform.

Group members were opposed to proposals to amend the oversight role of member states within the GA. Governance issues aside, other concerns cited included proposals relating to gender targets in the Secretariat, equitable geographical representation in recruitment, especially at senior levels, and increased procurement opportunities for developing countries.

Moreover, the Group did not accept that the majority of member states should forgo their right to pronounce on the administration of the UN so that the SG could carry out his duties. For a "small, but representative group of member states" to replace the role of all member states in carrying out the oversight responsibilities of the GA, was an attempt to deny every member state its rightful role.

Speaking for the EU and associated states, the representative of Austria expressed preference for a more detailed elaboration of the reform proposals and urged the SG to take action in the areas where no legislative mandate was needed.

GA President Jan Eliasson regretted the GA's inability to reach consensus on the resolution, but cautioned against inaction and urged member states to look forward and join forces in fulfilling the tasks the world leaders had entrusted to them at the 2005 World Summit.

He said the SG would prepare detailed reports in the coming weeks for the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Fifth Committee as follow up to the GA's resolution. The first reports would address accountability, information and communication technology, reporting mechanisms, and budgetary and financial management. In June, the SG would report on procurement, monitoring and evaluation issues. The third phase, in September, would focus on reforms in human resources management.

Buoyant Market!

In 1980, UNFICYP established the Maritime Security Lines (MSLs) as safety mechanisms for those at sea in the vicinity of the buffer zone where it reaches the sea. The MSLs are not seaward extensions of the BZ and UNFICYP has no maritime capability to police any breaches.

Both sides were notified of the creation of MSLs by UNFICYP. Although neither side officially accepted them, their existence was tolerated for safety reasons. The benefit of warning all fishermen of the dangers of fishing too close to Turkish Forces military positions was understood. The problem is further exacerbated at the eastern MSL in the summer months with tourist craft and pleasure boat operators from the Protaras/Ayia Napa area.



On 4 November 2005, one of the buoys on the Eastern MSL broke from its moorings and was recovered by two Greek Cypriot Maritime Police vessels.

In mid-February 2006, a Greek Cypriot fisherman was fishing in a small boat of the western side of the island near to Kokkina. UNFICYP requested the return of the boat on the grounds that it constituted the livelihood of the fisherman.

Authorities in the north stated the boat could not be returned until the confiscated buoy was returned. After some deliberation, this was agreed to and the buoy was released to UNFICYP by authorities in the south.

UNFICYP Ops served as intermediary for the exchange, which involved help from SCAT, FMPU, UN Engineers, PIO interpreters, and many other elements of UNFICYP. Boat and buoy were brought to the UNPA as the most convenient point for the exchange. After both parties had inspected their respective items for any signs of damage, the exchange took place.

It was as always, a pleasure to act as intermediary for this bi-communal and inter-agency cooperation, and we look forward to similar success on a grander scale in the future. TM



30 Years Service

In the bright sunshine of the Headquarters central courtyard, SRSG Michael Møller presented four UNFICYP staff members with certificates in recognition of more than 30 years of dedicated service in support of world peace. The special scrolls were signed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

The ceremony took place after the weekly Friday briefing for mission-wide staff on 7 April, when coffee and cakes were served to all.

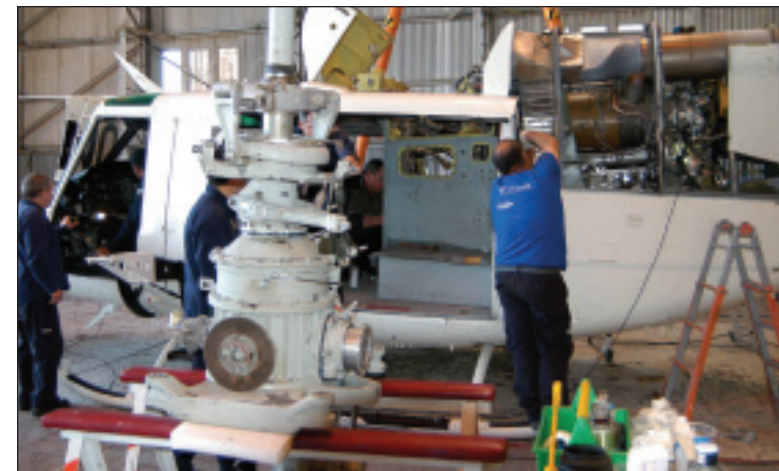
From the left: CCITS Robert Walker, PO Mauno Vanttaja, FC Maj. Gen. Rafael José Barni, SRSG Michael Møller, CAO Francis Clancy and CISS Gianfranco Longo

Maintenance of the Bell 212

There is one Bell 212 helicopter here in UNFICYP. It is larger than the Hughes 500, the difference being that the Bell has two engines and can seat up to 10 passengers as well as three crew (two pilots and one technician), whereas the Hughes can only take three passengers and one pilot.

Every 1,000 flying hours, a major inspection of the entire helicopter including the air frame and engines must be carried out.

Since its arrival in December 2000, UNFICYP's Bell 212 has covered 3,000 flying hours here in Cyprus. Hence, this was the third 1,000-flying hour inspection.



Technicians removing the main gear box and main rotor blade

The inspection begins with the disassembling of the entire helicopter. The process takes about two weeks to complete. Three specialists flew in to take part in this inspection, along with eight technicians from UN Flight. One auditor came from Argentina, also an engineer, to oversee the quality of work being carried out.

Included in the maintenance was the inspection of the air frame, the main rotor blades, the tail rotor blades, the main transmission, both engines, the electrical installations and flying instruments, and the electronic/fuel/hydraulic/oil systems.

Logistical planning is essential. When an item has to be replaced during the inspection, it means that the Air Force base in Argentina has to acquire the part in a very short space of time (two to three days), as opposed to 15 days under normal conditions. However somehow they manage, as was the case this time, and the inspection was completed successfully.

UN Flight now has a further 1,000 flying hours to look forward to in the Bell 212.



Crossing Re-Opened

The refurbished Astromeritis-Zodhia/Bostanci crossing re-opened for business on 29 March 2006. It closed for a period of almost four months for road improvements including fencing and lighting.

The crossing improvement project was implemented thanks to EU funding and executed by UNDP/PFF. Road construction workers, leaders from communities on either side of the buffer zone, and PFF and UNFICYP officials got together to celebrate the project's completion.

Left: Contractors from both sides with PFF's Tiziana Zennaro and her team, plus Maj. Friedrich Scheibler, Civil Affairs Military Liaison Officer

Nicosia Library Hosts Training Day

The UNPA Nicosia Library hosted the Cyprus Army Library Services (ALiBS) Staff Training Day on 27 March. Participants included the newly appointed Head of Library Services, Mrs. Sue Lloyd, and Library staff from Episkopi, Dhekelia and Ayios Nicolaos. After the meeting, the group toured the UNPA and then enjoyed a lunch at a local Nicosia restaurant.

For those not familiar with the UNPA Library – it is located in "Married Quarters" and is open:

Monday to Thursday 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Friday : 9.00 a.m. to 2.30 pm

Anyone with a UNPA access pass can join. Just drop by and speak to Anthe or Marita. Apart from shelf-loads of books, the library also carries a range of videos and DVDs.



From left to right: Anthoulla, Panikos, Helena, Maria, Anthe (the hostess), Filjo, Kristine, Marita, Mary, Georgia and Sue



Meet Major-General Rafael José Barni

An Interview with the new Force Commander

Asked whether he was considering any changes or improvements after his initial assessment tour, the FC replied emphatically: "A lot! I am not used to accepting reality as it is shown to me. I try to change things all the time. Of course, it is not always possible to change many things but for now, I don't accept the situation as it is and if I think that something can be improved, I will try to do so. Time will tell whether I am right or wrong. But my attitude is to try to change if change is needed. Of course, there are many things working perfectly, so I will not try to change things simply for the sake of change."

One area he plans to focus on is communication and coordination between the military, police and civilian affairs. "Individually, the military, police and civilian affairs work very well. But one thing that needs to improve is the coordination of the three. If we want to support the Chief of Mission's political aspirations, our reason for being here, then we have to coordinate the work among the three pillars better. This is one of the things I aim to change."

Each branch needs to improve its coordination and to share information and experience with the others as well, even though each sector may face different problems and situations on a daily basis. "I say this because Sectors 1 and 2 may know nothing about some experiences that Sector 4 has had, in negotiating problems or violations for example. Since we are dealing with the same actors – the opposing forces and/or the civilian muhktars – we can learn from the way situations were dealt with, rightly or wrongly, provided this information is passed on and shared. The same applies to other branches – in information, communication, operations."

The Force Commander points out that HQ may have to be reorganised since last year's force reduction changed the concept of operations. The one thing that has not changed is the last 32 years, he notes. "We will have to adapt HQ for the new concept of operations and the new demands we have, particularly for the civilian affairs section and UNPOL."

Maj.Gen. Barni stresses the importance of interaction between peacekeepers and their civilian colleagues with the civilian population of the two communities.

The Force Commander says he will not accept lack of discipline from his soldiers or their units. He is also particularly sensitive to gender issues and has zero tolerance for violations or abuse in this area. "Anything that reduces our credibility, and that is the key word, as UN soldiers is unacceptable because we are in a sensitive environment here in Cyprus and we have to play an important role between the two sides. They trust UNFICYP and if we disappoint the two sides because of bad behaviour, we will lose credibility and that – for me – is unacceptable."

He is, however, satisfied that he has good soldiers in UNFICYP. "I am dealing with very professional people – the ones I have seen on the ground – the British, the Slovakian, the Hungarian and, of course, the Argentinian are all very, very good soldiers and the

fact that the force is made up of soldiers from so many countries does not pose serious cultural problems." As the Force Commander notes, the military has more or less the same culture all over the world. This is why it is so easy to communicate with one another. "We have the same culture, the same way of conducting ourselves."

"Probably the most critical problem I face as FC is the communication issue because of the language. Not all the soldiers I mentioned above, the Argentinian, Slovakian and Hungarian, have the same English skills. We expect the different countries to send their people prepared for the mission, but I can see in certain instances that that is not always the case. However it is not a critical problem as the key officers in the different sectors are very proficient English speakers. The HQ staff is also made up of different nationalities, and we don't have any problem in communicating with each other either."

Satisfied with his soldiers' performance, the FC says they carry out their duties very professionally. "I used to say every Friday that if nothing happened this week, it is because the soldiers on the ground have fulfilled their mission successfully. I don't like to hear that the island has been quiet this week. When I hear this, it gives the impression that we are here for nothing. I say no – the opposite is true. Nothing has happened because we are doing the job we have been assigned to do. When I say 'we', I am referring in particular to the soldier on the ground, who has to deal with the daily problems involving the opposing forces."

The FC notes his philosophy is that we have to work as if we are the last UNFICYP mission on the island. "We have to fulfil the UNFICYP mandate, and that means we have to engage the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots and when we finish we have to close UNFICYP and go back to our respective countries. This may sound a little naive. After all, 32 years have passed without the problem being solved. There is always the possibility that we leave and the problem will continue. But it is all a matter of attitude. If I come here just to pass six months or a year, I will contribute nothing. But if, on the contrary, I say I want to be the last UNFICYP Force Commander because after that, the mission will close since we have fulfilled the mandate, then I will have worked positively."

The FC notes the mandate calls on the military to ensure the peace and let the politicians solve the problems. "If this mission has been quiet for 32 years, that means we have fulfilled our mandate. We have successfully kept the opposing forces from renewing hostilities against one another over the last 32 years." Nobody needs to feel frustrated, he says. Instead, they should consider what the situation would be if UNFICYP forces had not been here, serving as a buffer between the two opposing sides.

The FC cites a lesson he learned while serving as a military observer in south Lebanon. "Talking to a Canadian friend, I told him I felt frustrated that it was coming to time for me to leave and I had not solved the problem here. He told me, 'why don't you think in a vice-versa way. Because you were here, the problem is as you see it. But if you were not here, can you imagine how messy it would be?' I felt better and I believe that is the way to think. We are here in order to fulfil a mandate and to try to keep good relations in as firm and credible a way as possible."

On a personal note, Maj. Gen. Barni describes himself as a family man. He, his wife, two daughters and son make up a close-knit family. His eldest daughter got married on 25 February, just two days before he came to Cyprus. His second daughter, a kindergarten teacher, is working in a bilingual school in Argentina. "Her English is much better than her father's," he says laughing. She was in Cyprus in 1997 when he was Commanding Officer in Sector 1. He points to a photo of his son in a military cadet uniform of the Officer's Academy. The FC says he is very proud that his son chose to follow in his footsteps, particularly since he never pressured him in any way to do so. "I am very proud of him. He will receive the rank of first lieutenant at the end of the year, so I will probably travel to Argentina in order to attend the ceremony."

It is the first time he and his wife have been so far away from their children and they miss them a lot. However, he says they have accepted it because the three are all doing so well in their respective jobs and studies. "They are very responsible and we hope to have them here with my new son-in-law in July for at least a week to ten-day holiday."

The FC enjoys golf as a hobby and happily accepted the position of honorary president of the UNFICYP golf club. Unfortunately, because of his duties, he has been unable to tee up yet, but plans to do so as soon as duties permit. He also enjoys reading books on international relations and history, as well as assembling models of military tanks.

Netha Kreouzou

Mrs. Maria Rosa Palacios de Barni, the FC's wife, also tells the **Blue Beret** she is happy to be back in Cyprus. and that it is very different to when she was based in Skouriotissa as the Contingent Commander's wife. There she was more isolated with only the company of other Argentinian wives. They would visit Nicosia only from time to time for social events. Now, as the Force Commander's wife, she has to deal with an international environment and has a far busier schedule with numerous functions and receptions to attend. Since her arrival, she has been busy preparing their house although their belongings only arrived a couple of weeks ago. "I have been trying to transform our house into our nest and it is coming along, little by little," she said.

She has also been taking computer lessons in order to perfect her internet skills, vital to maintaining contact with her children. Her hobbies include walking and exercising as well as reading novels.



New CO Sector 2

Lieutenant Colonel Derek Hudson was commissioned into the Royal Artillery in December 1983 having completed officer training at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.

The majority of his career has been spent on postings away from the UK, predominantly in Germany. Regimental duty with the AMF(L) Gun Battery, 50 Missile Regiment and 2 Field Regiment were followed by two years as ADC to the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Field Marshal Vincent, in Brussels. He went on to attend the Army Staff Course at Camberley before spending another three years in a grade two staff appointment in the Headquarters of the

Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (HQ ARRC). He commanded an AS90 artillery battery in 4th Regiment before moving to the Headquarters of the 1st (UK) Armoured Division, where he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 2002. He returned to 4th Regiment in 2004, this time as commanding officer. He has completed operational tours in Iraq (several times), Cyprus, Northern Ireland and Kosovo.

Lt.Col. Hudson is married to Chantal and they have three young children. He enjoys most outdoor pursuits and used to be quite a competent sportsman. Now he mainly runs, which he sometimes enjoys.



4 Regiment Royal Artillery – A Brief History

4th Regiment Royal Horse Artillery was formed at Helmhieh in Egypt in May 1939 from three batteries drawn from independent commands in India. The batteries were C Battery, F (Sphinx) Battery and G Battery (Mercer's Troop). It was equipped with the 25 pdr MK VP.

4th Regiment RHA was part of 7th Armoured Division. The Regiment was involved in numerous subsequent battles in the desert. These included Bardia, the capture of Tobruk, Beda Fomm, Sidi Rezegh and the break out from El Alamein. The Regiment returned to England in 1943 to train for the invasion of Europe. It landed in France on 8 June 1944 and saw subsequent action right up until the end of WW II.

At the end of the war, the Regiment remained in Germany until 1948, when it returned to England for a short time before moving to Hohne, Germany in 1951. The Regiment comprised F, G and I Batteries and was equipped with the M44 Self-Propelled Howitzer.

On 27 June 1961, the Regiment lost F, G and I Batteries to the newly formed 7th Parachute Regiment RHA, and was retitled 4th Regiment Royal Artillery. It gained 29 (Corunna), 88 (Arracan) and 97 (Lawson's Company) as its batteries, and moved to the Far East where the Regiment saw active service in Borneo before returning to Germany in 1965.

In March 1977, the Regiment replaced 7th Regiment RHA in Aldershot, converting to the Light Gun and adopting the parachute role. It was during this time that the Regiment once again saw active service, on Operation CORPORATE – the Falkland Islands Campaign, from 20 May to 14 June 1982. Soon after, 4th Regiment RA changed roles with 7th Regiment RHA and moved to Osnabruck, Germany. Originally equipped with the M109 155mm Self-Propelled Howitzer in support of 4th Armoured Division, the Regiment is now equipped with AS90 155mm Self-Propelled Howitzer in support of 1st (UK) Armoured Division.

In May 1993, the Regiment was joined by 52 (Niagara) Battery from 45th Regiment RA (on disbandment). 29 (Corunna) Battery combined with 3 Battery (from 47th Regiment RA) to become 3/29 (Corunna) Battery and Headquarters Battery became 94 (New Zealand) Headquarters Battery.

Recent operations include six emergency tours of Northern Ireland (1972, 1973, 1976, 1991, 1994 and 2003). It deployed to Bosnia in 1996 and in 1999, the Regiment deployed to the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia as part of a NATO peacekeeping force on Operation AGRICOLA and was the first Artillery unit to

move into Kosovo. Its role on Op AGRICOLA was monitoring the withdrawal of Serbian Forces and the disarmament of the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Since 2000, the Regiment's operational commitments have continued. Soldiers of the Regiment have exercised in Germany, Poland, Canada and Jordan and were involved in assisting during the Foot and Mouth Crisis and Firefighters' strike. In January 2003, the Regiment reinforced the Artillery Group for Operation TELIC in Iraq. The Regiment returned to Iraq in November 2004, with AS90, however its primary role was that of a reinforcement Infantry Company, patrolling the streets of Basra. In addition, Regimental Headquarters was responsible for the Security Sector Reform. Its tasks included overseeing the training of the Iraqi Police Force, re-equipping/distributing equipment and providing support to Headquarters 4th Armoured Brigade and the Directorate of Border Enforcement. It is less than a year since the Regiment's return from Iraq, and it is now well into Op TOSCA in support of the UN in Cyprus. In 2007, the Regiment will either deploy to Afghanistan or Iraq.

In March 1974, the Regiment was honoured by the conferment of the Honorary Freedom of the County Borough of Sunderland. The close bond with Sunderland began in the 1960s. Since then, the number of soldiers in the Regiment who come from the north east of England has risen to 80%.



The AS90 gun used by the Regiment

New Faces

Chief Civil Affairs Officer

Kyoko Shiotani, known to her friends as Kiki, arrived on 18 April to take up the post of CCAO.

Kiki, who is from Japan, holds a Masters in International Affairs from Columbia University. She arrived from New York where she worked in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General from 2004 to 2006, together with SRSg Mr. Møller. Before that, she was in the DPKO Office of Operations as a Desk Officer in the Asia-Middle East Division.

Kiki joined the United Nations in 1992 with the Department of

Political Affairs and joined DPKO in 1993. She covered UNIKOM (Iraq) and UNTAET (East Timor), UNMOT (Tajikistan) and UNIFIL, UNTSO and UNDOF. She also spent six months in Tajikistan.

Kiki is married to John van Rosendaal and they have two children, a boy of 8, Kai, and a girl of 5, Maya. The family arrived together, and they are all looking forward to exploring the island. With a busy job and two young children, Kiki still manages to read and enjoy music. She also looks forward to improving her swimming skills.



Chief Civilian Personnel Officer



Christine Botejue-Kyle arrived in UNFICYP on 2 April as the new CCPO, replacing Charles Mix who left the mission in late September 2005.

Christine, who comes from Toronto, Canada, graduated with a degree in International Development Studies and Political Science. Since then, she has had over 15 years of overseas UN experience, serving extensively in hardship areas including Sri Lanka, Nicaragua, East Timor and Kosovo. She has focused mainly on human resource management, administration and project evaluations. She

has also been involved extensively with the United Nations Volunteer Programme, having served herself as a UN Volunteer in Sri Lanka and more recently as the Chief of the UNV programme in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Christine is married to Erjon Latifi, and has two sons, Kevin (12) and Shaun (9). All have accompanied her to this mission. As Christine has spent many years on unaccompanied tours, she intends to stay mostly on island and enjoy some valuable time together with her family. Christine enjoys music, dancing and trying new cuisines.

Farewell Mauno

UNFICYP's former Chief Procurement Officer Mauno Vanttaja retires after an interesting 32 years of UN service.

Mauno joined the UN in 1974 on completing the Police Academy in Helsinki, Finland. His first assignment was to Ismailia/UNEF II as a Security Officer, after which he spent seven years in Jerusalem/UNTSO at the Central Registry Unit. During this time, his two children were born in Jerusalem.

Mauno's service has taken him to 11 missions including UNTSO, UNFICYP, UNEF II, UNAMIR, UNAVEM, UNIFIL, UNOMIL, UNMOGIP, UNMOT, MINURSO, and UNIKOM where he performed various functions, mainly in procurement.

Mauno has been assigned to UNFICYP three times, in 1983 as Registry Officer and later Procurement and Shipping Officer, 1995 as CPO and again in 2005 as CPO. 1995 was particularly symbolic as his function was to set up Procurement as a separate section.

On his departure on 30 April, Mauno is taking his wife Dilya to visit their favourite European countries including Italy, Spain and France. Their final destination is Mauno's home town of Kuusamo, Finland, where many projects await his attention, including his summer cottage. He will also take time out to enjoy his hobbies, including fishing, photography and golf.

Mauno has gained many life experiences and has numerous stories of interest from his UN service which we hope, one day, he will put down on paper. He has made many friends during his time in Cyprus and will definitely be returning to the island in the future.

We wish Mauno a very enjoyable retirement.



CAO Frank Clancy presenting Mauno with his farewell gift during the Section's dine out

UNPOL Medal Parade



On 14 April, 17 UN Police Officers from Australia, Bosnia, India, Italy and The Netherlands were lined up in front of the contingent flags and the flag of the United Nations to receive their UN medal.

Deputy Senior Adviser Col Speedie, in his role as Master of Ceremony, welcomed all the guests on behalf of the Senior Police Adviser and himself and introduced the programme of the medal presentation.

Commissioner Carla van Maris addressed warm words of welcome to everybody present at the ceremony. There was a special welcome for members of the diplomatic corps, especially the Ambassador of Bosnia who had travelled from Israel to this occasion.

The Commissioner also singled out the Cyprus Police Band. Playing at the ceremony under the direction of Inspector George Adamou, the Band played a compilation of the five National Anthems of the medal recipient contingents.

Chief of Mission, Mr. Michael Møller, spoke of the contribution made by the mission's police officers to the Cyprus peacekeeping mission and of the difficult role they fulfil.

Afterwards, Mr. Møller pinned UN medals to the recipients' uniforms and congratulated them on behalf of the Secretary-General.

Then guests and recipients adjourned to a well-catered reception behind the International Cafeteria.

Blue Beret Retrospective

Leafing back through the pages of the Blue Beret, one can see that over the decades, it is business as usual for UNFICYP. Political talks to the welfare of the soldiers are as current now as they were then.

April 1966

Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cyprus Carlos Bernardes left for Geneva where he was scheduled to meet with Secretary-General U-Thant to report on developments concerning the Cyprus problem.

In March, the SG had broadened Bernardes' responsibilities to enable him to use his "good offices" and make approaches to the "parties in or outside of Cyprus" in an effort to achieve "discussions at any level of problems and issues of either a purely local or a broader nature".



April 1976

A chapter in the history of the Austrian Medical Corps closed when the UNFICYP Medical centre closed on 12 April 1976. An Austrian medical team had served

UNFICYP for 12 years providing a Field Hospital from 1964 to 1973 and since then ran the Medical Centre. The centre was taken over by the British and Canadians.



What made Katie's Parents Run!

On 23 April 2006, Jon and Andrea Moss of BRITCON, UNFICYP, gathered with 45,000 others in the drizzle on Blackheath to run the 2006 Flora London Marathon. The weather was in stark contrast to that in which they had trained running around and around the UN Protected Area (UNPA) in Nicosia, which is centred around the old Nicosia Airport. The last four months have been hard – their trainers could do it on their own, they know the routes so well!

Jon and Andrea were running to raise money for the Dwarf Athletics Association (DAA), which enables dwarf athletes to compete against their peers. Jon and Andrea's daughter, Katie, aged four, has a form of dwarfism called achondroplasia and recently competed in the UK DAA games. Katie constantly tells them that she wants to be big like her sister Ellie! To them, donating to this charity is without doubt a worthwhile cause as it enables those like Katie to compete on equal terms, something that is denied them in everyday life.

As anyone who has ever run the London Marathon will tell you, there are so many people on the course that it is difficult to keep a steady pace. There are other hazards too! In the incessant rain, Andrea fell after six miles, slipping on a discarded Lucozade bottle and injuring her knee. As a consequence, the run was more difficult than originally anticipated. Andrea was very brave to continue, despite being in continuous pain. However, a combination of pain killers, a knee brace and sheer determination won the day!

The total raised is still unclear, but at the moment stands at about UK £4,200. This will be forwarded to the Dwarf Athletics Association.

A big thank-you to their sponsors and a special thank-you to all at the UN, Highgate School Nicosia, family and friends for their generous contributions.

When asked, would they do it again? The reply was, "No, never! Well..., perhaps." JMM



History of the London Marathon

In 1979, hours after having run the New York Marathon, the former Olympic champion Chris Brasher wrote an article for *The Observer* which began: "To believe this story you must believe that the human race be one joyous family, working together, laughing together, achieving the impossible. Last Sunday, in one of the most trouble-stricken cities in the world, 11,532 men and women from 40 countries in the world, assisted by over a million black, white and yellow people, laughed, cheered and suffered during the greatest folk festival the world has seen." Enchanted with the sight of people coming together for such an occasion, he concluded questioning "... whether London could stage such a festival?"

Within months the London Marathon was born. Brasher's vision was realised on 28 March 1981, with the inaugural London Marathon proving an instant success.

As a fundraising event, there is no marathon in the world that comes close to the Flora London Marathon. One of the dominant images of the race is that of thousands clad in fancy dress, tramping the cobbles in support of charitable causes dressed as rhinos, football team mascots, giant trees and the like.

Since 1981 it is estimated that over £200 million has been raised for charities world-wide. Three out of four entrants run for a cause close to their hearts.

A donation will help to make the aspirations of dwarf athlete a reality. Please, please, consider a donation. You can also donate on line at:

<http://www.justgiving.com/jonandandreamoss>

I can also be contacted on 2261 4667 or at

unficy-fmpu-csm@unficy.org on Lotus.

Jon Moss, FMPU

UNFICYP Visitors



Chief Constable J. M. Van Deursen of the Regional Police Force of Gelderland-Midden, The Netherlands – 24 March



Danish students group at UNFICYP HQ – 3 April



Swedish peacekeeping veterans at Camp Gen. Štefánik – 12 April



Danish peacekeeping veterans at Camp San Martín – 21 March



CM greets Mr. Akihiko Teruuchi from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs – 28 March



French delegation from L'Association Realite et Relations Internationales – 2 April



Representatives from the Cyprus Maronite community paid their first visit to Chief of Mission Michael Möller on 12 April.

The Maronites, one of the island's minority groups, trace their history in Cyprus back over 1,000 years. The purpose of their visit was to discuss the problems facing the community under the current circumstances on the island, specifically Maronite villages located in the north, and general matters including farming rights, EU funding and religious freedom of movement.

The Maronite delegation (see left) included MSgr. Ioannis Orphanou, Mr. Antonios Hadji-roussos, Mr. Ioannis Kontos, Mr. Petros Markou, Mr. Guido Kapiri and Mr. Joseph Pekris.

On the Sporting Front

On 15 April, three members of the MFR picked up trophies at the annual "Nicosia Run along the Green Line" 5 km road race. Despite being new to the island and only just acclimatised, 3/29 Bty, which makes up the bulk of the MFR, made time in their training

Road Race

schedule to send two of their keenest runners to race against 90 local athletes through the streets of Nicosia. Sgt. Rosie Goodwin-Jones from the RAMC, based in the UNPA, and SSgt. Jane Cawley from the FMPU also entered the race.

Sgt. Scott Henshaw was the MFR's best hope and ran a strong race chasing the lead group throughout,

but the heat was too much and he was pushed back to 6th place overall in the final stretches of the race. He still picked up the trophy for fastest in the over-30 category finishing in 17 minutes 26 seconds. Gnr. Gareth Leyland was running his first competitive race and finished 26th overall, coming first in the under-20 category.

Sgt. Rosie Goodwin-Jones won the overall female category with a sprint finish, beating her nearest rival by mere inches in just 20 minutes 16 seconds. SSgt. Jane Cawley took home the trophy for the fastest over-30 female.

From the left: Sgt. Scott Henshaw, Sgt. Rosie Goodwin-Jones, SSgt. Jane Cawley and Gnr. Gareth Leyland



Sgt. László "Roger" Varga and Sgt. Mike Abbot are both keen darts players. For this reason, the International Police Club was booked for the evening of 21 April at 7.30 p.m. when the "Roger Darts Tournament" went into full swing.

Twelve players took part representing almost all the UNFICYP nations in a match that lasted almost five hours. This was, of course, including a wonderful Hungarian goulash, prepared by cooks

from Athienou, accompanied by good music and beer and a great atmosphere.

The competition was won by PIO's Force Photographer Sgt. Jozef Kocka, who walked away with the winnings (£24.00 collected from the entrants' fees) and the IPC cup.

Another match is planned for the near future – where Roger hopes to receive the cup, rather than present it (see Jozef, left, receiving his prize!)

Darts

Not content with being runners up last season, the UNFICYP Orienteering Team pulled out all the stops and successfully won the Minor Units Orienteering League Championship Trophy for the 2005/2006 season.

Orienteering

Orienteering, often known as "cunning running", involves navigating yourself round a course of length and difficulty to your standard. It is becoming increasingly popular world-



UNFICYP's Orienteering Team

wide. Training and beginner events will be held at least once a month to prepare the team for the next season which begins in September.

Although predominantly military training, everyone is welcome and more women and children are becoming hooked than ever before. If you would like to participate, brush up on your map reading skills and get fit at the same time, then please contact team coordinator Diana Bridger on 22-614756.

Aussie Entertainment

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

Other Australian performers were fellow country music singer Rebecca Lavell, the beautiful voice behind each track on the songs from the popular Australian television series "McLeod's Daughters", and the man who had the audience in raptures Wayne Deakin, a Melbourne comedian who tours extensively throughout Australia and has performed at the Montreal Comedy Festival.

The surprise guest performer was AFP member Jason Striegher a man of many talents.

The Blundell road show came to Cyprus after entertaining Australian soldiers serving with the Multi-national Force and Observers in the Sinai Peninsula in north-east Egypt. The entertainment was organised by the Forces Advisory Council on Entertainment (FACE).



Jason Striegher on guitar with James Blundell on harmonica

The performers, who donated their time and talents free of charge, are now back in Australia.