Mourning Augustine Bielonwu
On 29 August, members of the UN Security Council expressed their support for the Secretary-General’s continued efforts to help reach a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. They also urged that work begin quickly to make a reality of the commitments undertaken by the two sides in their 8 July agreement.

Security Council President, the Permanent Representative of Ghana, Nana Effah-Apenteng, told press that the Council welcomed the 8 July agreement, reached by the two sides during USG Ibrahim Gambari’s visit outlining further steps in the latest diplomatic drive to forge a settlement of the decades-old Cyprus problem.

He noted that the text was agreed after Mr. Gambari’s meetings with the two leaders, H.E. Tassos Papadopoulos and H.E. Mehmet Ali Talat, and that the Set of Principles included commitment to the unification of Cyprus based on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation and political equality, as set out in SC resolutions.

The Council President said the members “call for full implementation of the 8 July Agreement without further delay, and urge that work begin quickly”. He allowed how there had been talk of “a little progress” since the USG’s visit, but said “there is still much more to be done”. Because there are still some differences as to how to tackle the problem, it was the Council’s view “that until we are sure of concrete and tangible progress, it would not be advisable to launch full-scale negotiations”, he concluded.

The statement came after closed door consultations during which USG Gambari briefed the Council on his July visit to Cyprus and the wider region, as well as developments on UNIFIL, UNDOF and UNMEE. He emphasized the importance of full implementation of the 8 July Agreement, and invited the Council to reinforce that message.

Augustine Bielonwu, UNIFIL 2006

UNIFIL and UNICYP staff thronged St. Columbia’s Church in the UNPA on 31 August for a solemn ceremony mourning UNIFIL civilian staff member Augustine Bielonwu, who was killed during an Israeli rocket attack on 17 July in Tyre, Lebanon.

“His unexpected and tragic passing has shocked us all and filled our hearts with sorrow,” USG Jean-Marie Guéhenno told the gathering. In his eulogy, Mr. Guéhenno paid tribute to Mr. Bielonwu, a UN staff member since 1989.

“Augustine was a paragon of courage, industry and unselfish devotion to duty. Those who knew him admired and respected him. He was gentlemanly, scholarly and kindly. He was an international civil servant in the very best sense of the term, and one who verily and truly exemplified the spirit of the United Nations.”

Father Kevin Prince officiated at the memorial service, which featured selected readings by a number of UNIFIL staff members, Chief Administrative Officer, Paul Thompson, among them. Group Captain E.K. Boateng attended on behalf of the UNIFIL Force Commander.

UNICYP staff members, led by SRSG Michael Møller and Force Commander Maj. Gen. Rafael Barns, joined their UNIFIL colleagues and staff from UNIIIC in paying their respects and in extending their condolences to the Bielonwu family and friends.

Mr. Bielonwu, who is survived by six children, was killed during the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah when an Israeli rocket hit the building where he lived in Tyre.

Four UNTSO military observers deployed in southern Lebanon also died during the conflict. Since 1978, 258 UNIFIL staff members have died while in service with the mission.

Two Augustin Bielonwu, a UNIFIL civilian staff member from Nigeria, was killed during an Israeli rocket attack on 17 July 2006 in Tyre, Lebanon.

My first responsibility as Secretary-General is to take care that no staff member’s life is needlessly or recklessly endangered. Let me therefore assure colleagues here, and all those in the field, that I will continue doing my utmost to ensure that UN staff have the training, protections and policies they need to carry out their vital work in the service of humankind.

Were they with us today, I believe our murdered colleagues would be immensely proud that, despite the dangers, the difficulties, and the near unbearable threats to our safety, the USG inspected an honour guard of UNIFIL headquarters before meeting with the Chief of Mission. He was subsequently briefed on mission activities by senior staff.

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In our last issue, we detailed some of the effort made in the evacuation of colleagues and others from the Lebanon and the resupply support UNIFCYP helped to maintain. Here we report more of the on-going effort and the special roles played by UNIFCYP Procurement, Supply and Logistics Units.

Prior to loading the re-supply vessels, Maj. Stan Boyd, WO1 Peter Hall and WO1 Maj. Petter were heavily involved in the reconnaissance of the ports to ensure an effective and integrated support shown throughout the operation with all personnel military and civilian working hand-in-glove to make it happen.

Reflecting on the work achieved, Boyd says, “It was a very intense period where impossible tasks were called for and we managed to make the impossible possible in very tight time frames. Knowing that another mission is relying on you makes you go the extra mile to make things happen,” he said.

Lt. Stefano Llobet

Logistics: Chief Personnel and Logistics Officer Lt. Col. Alex Boyd and his team are tasked with ensuring that personnel, equipment and supplies get to A in A without incident and in various means for whatever reason. This meant that they were involved in the Lebanon evacuation and re-supply from the outset.

UNIFCYP is a small mission without a lot of resources. With one person per job, when fatigue sets in there is no fallback for rest. “My people were trying to keep both UNIFCYP running, while at the same time providing vital assistance to the population. It was very little sleep during those critical 14 days,” Boyd said. In fact, they were multi-tasked, working around the clock for the safe evacuation and relocation of UN staff from Lebanon, the re-supply of UNIFIL and establishment of UNIIIC and UNIFIL offices in UNIFCYP.

The initial re-supply for UNIFIL involved getting 300 pallets of water, rations, medical supplies and communications equipment as well as diesel fuel onto the Siroco within 48 hours of receiving the call for assistance. Not only did they manage to do this, but an extra 100 pallets were loaded onto the Siroco following skillful negotiation by Lt. Col. Boyd with the ship’s captain. Medical supplies including blood, communications equipment and rations were being flown into Larnaca Airport for on-shipping to Lebanon. Diesel fuel, including means to transport it, was procured.

The Supply Unit was heavily involved in palletizing the various supplies being flown into Larnaca Airport, being flown to Beirut and delivered to the port by drivers and vehicles called in from all the UNIFCYP sectors.

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ISS sends special thanks for the support received from all UN agencies and bodies such as WFP, OCHA, UNICEF, WHO and UNHCR, working alongside and with a range of some 20-30 international relief NGOs and agencies.

Before moving on to his next assignment, WFP’s Philippe Martou, who set up the UNJLC at the start of the crisis, took time to thank both UNIFCYP and the Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs for all the support and assistance they gave to the UNJLC in coordinating the humanitarian relief effort. Martou singled out Mr. Pericles Stivlaris of the MFA for special mention as their project officer, and facilitate the UNJLC’s work with his contacts and knowledge of the local scene.

UN Joint Logistics Cluster

The Story behind “United Nations 024”

UN Flight was requested to transport the Lebanese Prime Minister, Fuad Siniora, to Cyprus on 25 July from Beirut so that he could enplane at Larnaca Airport and continue his connection in Rome, called to initially help achieve a ceasefire in Lebanon. Covering a distance of 205 km, a journey of 1 hour 40 minutes and at an altitude of 3000 ft, the Larnaca–Beirut-Larnaca round trip seemed an easy enough task.

Not so. The Bell 212, used for the task, could not travel back on one tank-full of fuel. And there were no refuelling facilities in Beirut at that time. However, in Argentina UNIPOL transport tanks carrying 200 litres of petrol are regularly used when fuel resupply is not available at the destination. This idea was put forward and accepted.

The route was planned. At 12.05 p.m., the helicopter with crew members Lt. Col. Simo, Capt. Longo and WO1 Peter Hall started its flight from the UN Flight hangar in the UNPA flying via Larnaca Airport (for administrative reasons) and then on to Beirut Port. Not without incident. However, half an hour after take-off, the Israeli Defence Forces contacted UN Flight imposing a restriction on the designated flight path. The crew was ordered to re-route along new coordinates. This meant that distance, time and fuel had to be recalculated.

The helicopter pilot reached the holding point, he made contact with the Israeli Defence Forces and was authorised to proceed as directed to Beirut Port.

At 4.10 p.m. the Bell 212 landed. Immediately, the crew off-loaded the tanks and started refuelling, only to find themselves caught up in an attack launched on Beirut. Explosions rocked the Port, encouraging the crew to refuel as quickly as possible. Prime Minister Siniora arrived and climbed on board and the Bell 212 took off for Larnaca following the same route. During their brief stay in Beirut, the crew had no communica-
tion withNicosa. The team on the ground were very happy to hear the message “Nicosa – this is United Nations 024 calling in”.

In 50 minutes, the helicopter landed at Larnaca Airport and at 8.30 p.m., it was back in the UNPA.

Mission “Bandidos” accomplished!

Two days later, UN Flight was requested to carry Prime Minister Siniora back to Beirut. Same route, same clearances but change of crew – this time it was Capt. Ortiz, Capt. Longo and Sgt. Heredia. Another change was the refuelling technique. The Prime Minister and senior officials on board, there was no additional room for the fuel tanks, so the Lebanese Forces provided fuel for us on arrival in Beirut. Prime Minister safely delivered, and tanks refilled, the helicopter took off for the return journey, arriving at 4.50 p.m. in the UNPA.

Operation Bandidos 2 successful!
UNPOL and SCAT personnel, transported the pilgrims in UN vehicles to the chapel and then back that afternoon. They not only provided transport for the event, but also security and medical assistance. One of the drivers, MSgt. Láslo Bernatsky, transferred more than 62 pilgrims during this tiring but very rewarding day. He said the best present he received in return for his efforts were the smiles and words of acknowledgement from the pilgrims, most of them aged and with little knowledge of English. However, a smile requires no translation.

The ceremony was organised in collaboration with the Dherynea municipality. It ended at 12.30 p.m., after which the Mayor of Dherynea expressed his gratitude to all UNFICYP soldiers who assisted on the day.

The small Church inside the Monastery, built in 1508, could only hold about 100 worshippers. As many as possible crammed into the limited space. The remaining crowds ... the church. It was a hot, humid day. Ambulances were on standby, provided by the authorities in the north, just in case.

After a very emotional service, the icon was carefully removed and escorted back to Kormakiti. The Maronites wished to transfer the icon to its rightful place for this special occasion.

Arrangements were made, and word spread quickly within the Maronite community. By 8.30 a.m. on the day, an estimated 600 pilgrims from all over the island had arrived at the check-point. The 28 soldiers of Sector 4, together with the Mayor of Dherynea and representatives of the local municipality. Sector 4 officers who were present were invited for lunch by the Mayor of Dherynea and representatives of the local municipality.

For the last four years, UNFICYP has been facilitating the visit of Turkish Cypriots wishing to visit the village of Kokkina on 8 August. On this date, a commemoration service is held, honouring those who fell during the troubles in 1964.

More than 450 people arrived on the day at the Amadhies crossing point (OP 08) from Nicosia, Famagusta, Kyrenia and Morphou. Travelling in a convoy of 22 buses, they were escorted by Sector 1 personnel through the buffer zone to the village of Kokkina, arriving at approximately 10.00 a.m. People crowded into the mosque, kept in prime condition, to listen to speeches by a number of dignitaries, led by the Turkish Cypriot leader H.E. Mr. Mehmet Ali Talat. Once the speeches were over, the crowd moved on through the abandoned houses to the cemetery, about 500 metres away, to honour the dead.

Sector 1, accompanied by SCAT, coordinated the event which was carried out without incident. The whole operation took seven hours, and was considered a complete success.

**St. Elias Monastery**

St. Elias Monastery is the most important feast days in the Maronite Church’s calendar. Following the events of 1974, the icon of Prophet Elias, belonging to the monastery, had been moved to St. George’s Church in Kormakiti. The Maronites wished to transfer the icon to its rightful place for this special occasion.

The small Church inside the Monastery, built in 1508, could only hold about 120 worshippers. As many as possible crammed into the limited space. The remaining crowds stayed outside, happy to share in the ritual, even if it was from outside the church. It was a hot, humid day. Ambulances were on standby, provided by the authorities in the north, just in case.

After a very emotional service, the icon was carefully removed and escorted back to Kormakiti. Local papers from both north and south covered the occasion.

The Maronite community thanked UNFICYP for its support on the day, and noted how it continued to help the minority community with cultural, religious and humanitarian events on the island.

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 Town Hall Meeting

Chief of Mission SRSG Michael Møller hosted his second town hall meeting on 3 August to brief staff on the developments in Lebanon, the impact on UNFICYP, as well as progress made on the Cyprus problem.

The Chief of Mission pointed out how, with UNFICYP’s help, a total of 1,200 people were extracted from Lebanon, 350 being staff members and their dependants, while over half of the evacuees were women and children.

I will start by saying how proud I am of you. Of the way all sections pulled together to help our colleagues who were in trouble and needed to be evacuated. I can tell you that everything I hear from both headquarters and our colleagues on the ground is nothing but praise for the way UNFICYP helped.

Using boats and other means of transport, UNFICYP helped bring over 50 different nationalities to Cyprus, he said. “However, all this is important for me is not so much the numbers, but that the whole mission pulled together and showed that in a time of need, we can deliver in a very complex emergency situation. That is always good to know because unfortunately, I am sure it will happen again. It shows that our attempts at making sure the mission works as coherently as possible and as functioning fruit.”

A number of UNFIL and other staff from Lebanon will be based at UNFICYP, he said. “I know for some of you it is an imposition on your daily work. You have many other things to do that are UNFICYP-related, but the fact is that our colleagues need help and we are able to give it to them. I hope that you all will continue providing that assistance in the splendid spirit that you have done until now.”

Members of the III investigation team also relocated for the time being to offices in the UNPA. “They want to go back as soon as possible, that is where the job is and where they need to be operating from, but in the meantime, we will be providing them with assistance here,” the CM said.

Chief Administrative Officer Frank Clancy also thanked staff for the work done on the Lebanon crisis, particularly his own staff during his absence on leave. He recounted what a former ASG at OMS used to say when it came to evaluations. “I evaluate you not on how you perform when you are in the mission, but how you perform when you are away – in that case, I am doing very well,” the CAO said.

Mr. Clancy said UNFIL CAO Paul Thompson had asked that he specifically convey to all components of the mission his deepest gratitude for the assistance rendered. Without UNFICYP’s help, Mr. Clancy said, UNFIL would certainly not have survived. He noted that UNFIL had asked to set up a rear headquarters in the UNPA for about 23 to 25 staff.

Turning to the main order of business, SRSG Møller noted that things had changed considerably on the issue of Cyprus problem talks. “Last time I spoke to you, we were still trying to figure out a way to kick-start the process and come up with suggestions that would recreate the kind of trust and atmosphere needed in which these discussions would start.”

He noted that participants were given the chance to express their interest in exploring various aspects of negotiation and mediation while putting their skills in practice through role play exercises. Members of the group learned from each other by later sharing their different conflict management styles and cultural approaches to conflict. It was particularly valuable to examine the military and police perspectives alongside the development perspective, and to consider how these approaches can be combined.

“Monkey Business” in UNFICYP – Not what you’re thinking!

Monkey business is the term CITS technicians and riggers around the missions use when working on their contraptions that involve mechanics and radio links on. We climb up the inside, the outside and sometimes just plain old monkey business.

UNFICYP has played host to yet another training course organised by the United Nations Logistics Base and conducted here in Cyprus because of the facilities and support we can offer. Civilian instructors and UN staff who travel from all around the globe to attend.

When we were in the field, the towers were in good condition, the weather was perfect for working outside, and the training room, transportation and accommodation were excellent,” said MONUC’s Alpha Sesay, one of those attending the course.

It was fantastic to see people from seven different missions participate. It gave every one an exciting opportunity to update on what CITS is doing in the field, the security situations, mobility and logistics and the difficulties some missions face.

On a personal level, there was the opportunity to exchange news on friends seen for a few years and to find out how they are doing. The UN is big, but small at the same time.

Zulmai Musher of UNMIS appreciated the excellent training and the very good help from UNFICYP’s CITS staff. “If I had to add one thing, it would be that we spend some more time doing tower construction.”

Thanks are due to several people in UNLB who play such an important role in putting together courses for CITS mission personnel.

As noted, Cyprus is well situated geographically for UN missions to send people for training. To try to keep pace with demand, additional rigging courses are planned for later this year and also in 2007.

We had a great team of guys here for this course, and a member of our own commits team also came to see what was going on.

Well done to all concerned.

Bruce Larsen
This has been a month and more of youthful activities, starting with the worldwide celebration on 12 August of International Youth Day, a day, as can be seen from the SG’s message below, dedicated to the theme of young people and the eradication of poverty.

Here on the island, UNDP Action for Cooperation and Trust (ACT) was busy all month long (and in July!) helping organise a series of youth camps, and one island-by-island sailing expedition. More than 300 young Greek and Turkish Cypriots, plus a number of Greeks and Turks, have participated in the UNDP/ACT-funded TVP camps.

In his message, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan highlighted the importance of supporting young people and use their potential to the benefit of society. His message for International Youth Day is “Tackling poverty togeth-er: you and young people are the solution.”

Numbering more than one billion, the world’s young people have the potential to drive development and can be key agents of innovation and positive social change. Yet the scale of youth poverty robs the world of that potential. In a world of great riches, nearly one in five people between the ages of 15-24 must eke out an existence on less than one dollar per day, and almost half live on less than two dollars per day.

Youth make up one fourth of the world’s labour force, but they account for one half of its unemployed. Labour markets face difficulty providing stable occupations with good prospects for young people, except for the highly trained. Without decent jobs, young people are left susceptible to pov-erty, which in turn complicates access to education and basic services, further imped-ing employability. Over the long term, disad- vantaged youth will confront steep obstacles along the path to progress, and may not acquire the assets that commonly come through steady and long-term employment, such as access to assets and resources, strong social networks and decision-making status in the family or community.

“Our challenge is clear: we must pay more atten- tion to education, and in particular in the transition from education to employment. And the ability of youth to find full and productive employment must be a central objective of national development strategies, including poverty reduction policies.

The international community has recognized what experts are now calling the juvenileization of poverty. “The child is not responsible for poverty”, said the Chair of the 1995 World Pro-gramme of Action for Youth. The Programme has approached young people as equal partners in the global effort to eradicate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Government commit-ment to the development agenda was renewed and reinforced by the 2005 World Summit, which has opened up a fresh opportunity to engage youth in action on the issues that affect them. “On this Interna-tional Youth Day, let us seize that opportunity, and redouble our efforts to support young people and free up their enormous potential, for the benefit of us all”, the Chair of the 1995 World Programme of Action for Youth said.

Fair, play, teamwork and building of strong relation-ships are major elements in developing a healthy society, and these were the values at the heart of the Doves Olympic Movement, a Cypriot youth camp which finished its activities on 12 August.

UNDP/ACT helped bring 113 young people, aged 12-16 from all communities across the island to explore intercultural cooperation on environmental issues. The village of Agros was the venue for nine days of sport, culture and environmental awareness, enhanced by an exchange between athletes, and an enriched programme of environmental issues.

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The Doves Olympic Movement is just one of a series of youth camps held this summer. From 7-13 July and again, from 18-24 July two separate camps were held in the village of Kritou Terra, in the beautiful Akamas region between Limassol and Paphos. The theme for the first 15-year-old camp was “The Future Belongs to the Teenagers”, and Greek and Turkish Cypriots were encouraged to come together through sports and fun and face up to the problems of the region.

The Doves Olympic Movement is just one of a number of youth camps this summer. Between 2-9 July, the Peace Centre ran a camp in Larnaca, attended by 20 Cypriot teenagers aged 16-18 years. They learnt about peace education and conflict resolution in collabora-tion with WINPEACE (Women’s Initiative for Peace) and 20 young people from Greece and Turkey, who also participated.

The Environmental Studies Centre held two separate camps in the village of Kritou Terra, in the beautiful Akamas region between 7-13 July and again from 18-24 July. Together, the two camps attracted over 50 young Greeks and Turks, as well as some Cypriot students, who explored the opportunities for intercommunal coopera-tion on protecting the region’s unique and rich en-vironmental heritage.

The 2006 Summer Youth Camps programme con-tinued in August with the European Voyage of Understanding, where 12 young Cypriots from both communities spent 10 days as crew members on a square-rigged ship, sailing from Gibraltar to Italy. The aims of the programme were to promote mutual respect and tolerance among Cypriots through a “healthy mind in a healthy body”.

The final Summer Camp – “Together Anything is Possible” – was organised by the KAYAD Community Centre. It took place in Kyrenia between 21-31 August.

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The final Summer Camp – “Together Anything is Possible” – was organised by the KAYAD Community Centre. It took place in Kyrenia between 21-31 August, and stressed community service.

Over 25 young Greek and Turkish Cypriots, plus a number of Greeks and Turks, have participated in the UNDP/ACT-funded TVP camps, which were attended by more than 600 young Cypriots from all over the island.

Until recently, Jack had avoided a reunion with Chrysos, the memories of their first encounter have still not disappeared. However, fearing that Chrysos may have been terminally ill, he made moves to visit Cyprus.

On 22 May came the long-awaited reunion. Over a coffee and in broken English, Chrysos showed Jack how his wounds had healed and that, thanks to advanced prosthetic limb technology, he could now cross his legs! Jack’s wife Hedonina and Chrysos’ wife Toila also managed, in broken English and with the help of sign language, to communicate. With tears in her eyes, Toila expressed to Hedonina that, had Chrysos not survived, it would have been “kaput” for her – “big problem, babies no food” without a husband and a father.

Ten days later, a message passed through UNPOL’s Deputy Force Commander Col Speedie. Jack’s tour operator, heard that Chrysos was ill. He tried to contact him many times by letter and by telephone but without luck.

On 14 July this year, UNFICYP and the Mine Action Centre (MAC) returned the famous “blue tractor” to its owner, 27 years after it triggered a mine explosion in the Kaimakli area of Nicosia.

In July 2005, the Mine Action Centre (MAC) completed mine clearance operations in the buffer zone in Nicosia, clearing 140,000 square metres of land, while destroying 216 mines and sappers’ mines.

The de-mining project is funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Deve-loping Programme (UNDP) under the umbrella of the Partnership for the Future (PFF) programme.
before being presented with his own “mug” by the Senior Police Adviser Commissioner Carla Van Maris who spoke glowingly of the departing gardai. She even read a poem she had written, which was very touching and well received. Supt. John O’Connor spoke on behalf of the departing members.

Newly appointed Irish Ambassador, H.E. John Brady, attended and spoke of the gratitude and pride the Irish Government takes in the excellent performance of the Irish on UN missions.

A Powerpoint presentation made sure that none of the departing group left without all being given a chance to see photos of some of their “exploits”. The display was put together by Insp. Antonello Di Chiara of the Carabinieri, friend of the group. Deputy Senior Police Adviser Commander Col Spedie, CAO Mr. Frank Clancy and Spokesperson Mr. Brian Kelly were among the large attendance, as were representatives from all Sectors. Many thanks are due to Garda Aileen Magner who organised and arranged this very successful function.

The function started with a tasty buffet in the Club, followed by the customary presentation of mugs. Sgt. Jim McAlistier acted as M.C. Irish Contingent Commander Supt. Noel Galwey introduced and gave a brief run down on each of the departing contingent members.

Irish Veteran’s Association visit Wayne’s Keep

On 14 August 2006, 30 members of the Irish United Nations Veterans Association paid a visit to Wayne’s Keep cemetery to hold a memorial service for fallen comrades. Amongst the visitors were Mr. Liam Murray, National Chairman for IUNVA, and Mr. Dave Dooley who departed UNFICYP in 1993.

Irish UN Battalions served in Cyprus between 1964 and 2003. Some 10,000 peacekeepers served with the mission during that time. They were spread all across the island. Mr. Murray and his comrades remembered in particular Kato Pyrgos with fondness!

The memorial service was also attended by the contingent of Irish Police currently serving with UNPOL. They provided a welcome escort for the day. At the ceremony, sombre words were said and wreaths were laid, followed by a minute’s silence.

The group then left the cemetery and headed for the BRITCON Warrant Officers & Sergeants’ Mess for light refreshment. This gave everyone the chance to sit down and recall some of the old stories, several of which would put modern day tales to shame!

The IUNVA then presented the Sergeants’ Mess and UNPOL with small gifts before moving on to their next destination of Famagusta.

Global Compact Reception

On 27 July, the UN Global Compact Network for the Turkish Cypriot business community was officially launched in Nicosia in the presence of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Chief of Mission for Cyprus, Mr. Michael Møller, and other officials.

In his remarks, SRSG Møller noted that more than 3,000 companies worldwide participate in a voluntary corporate social responsibility initiative, first proposed by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in January 1999 when he addressed the World Economic Forum in Davos.

“The Compact is based on the idea that the business community does have power and responsibility in reinforcing human rights, ensuring fair working conditions and maintaining the earth in as a good a shape for future generations, as we found it for ourselves.”

Mr. Møller pointed out that the network being launched in Cyprus would join more than 50 existing networks worldwide, and therefore recognize the importance of corporate social responsibility and of taking supportive actions.

Sector 1’s “Magnificent Seven”

In most countries, the presence of women in the armed forces is no longer a rarity. Particularly in the 21st century, it is common to see military women working alongside men. This integration has become even more prevalent in the Argentinian Armed Forces over the last five to six years.

Military women joined the ranks of UNFICYP’s peacekeepers in 2001. Since then, more than 120 Argentinian women have proudly worn the United Nations blue beret, most of them attached to Army, but some from the Air Force and Navy.

At present, the Argentinian Contingent has seven women on its roster. They all come from the Argentinian Army and work in a wide variety of posts, including doctors, nurses, ordinance officers, drivers, clerks, cooks and mechanics. All arrived on the island with great personal and professional expectations, motivated by the importance of UNFICYP’s mission.

Since their arrival, they have performed all kinds of duties showing a high degree of professionalism and skill. Seen right is a photograph taken just before the “Magnificent Seven” set out for Cyprus. In carrying out their duties and functions, all have gained the respect of their military colleagues serving alongside them.

Of course, they also know that Argentine society as a whole supports and admires their achievements.

Argentinian Air Force Day

On 10 August, UN Flight’s hangar marked the location for the celebration of Argentinian Air Force Day, commemorating the establishment of the unit in 1912 by the then President of Argentina, Dr. Roque Sáenz Peña of the Military Aviation School at El Palomar City in the province of Buenos Aires.

This was Argentina’s first ever military air unit. The ceremony in the UNPA was presided over by Force Commander Maj. Gen. Rafael José Barni, and attended by military, ecclesiastical and special guests.

Lt. Gloria Mansilla (left), Ordinance Officer of the Argentinian Contingent in the last Military Skills Competition. She graduated as an Officer in 2002.

Cpl. Maria Belen de Zan (right) during training for the Military Skills Competition. She is married to an Army Sergeant (driver)

Standing (from the left): Cpl. Belen de Zan (driver), 1/Cpl. Romina Galvan (cook), Cpl. Celina Perez (driver), Cpl. Maria Valdebenito (driver)

Kneeling (from the left): 1/Lt. Gloria Menendez (doctor), Lt. Gloria Mansilla (ordnance), Cpl. Soledad Celayes (clerk)

Maj. Carlos Alberto Figueroa

Standing (from the left): Cpl. Belen de Zan (driver), 1/Cpl. Romina Galvan (cook), Cpl. Celina Perez (driver), Cpl. Maria Valdebenito (driver)

Kneeling (from the left): 1/Lt. Gloria Menendez (doctor), Lt. Gloria Mansilla (ordnance), Cpl. Soledad Celayes (clerk)
WO Reinhard Zeller took over the post of Force Data Base Manager in Ops Branch from WO2 Werner Bartsch on 28 August.

Since hisPosting as an NCO within the Royal Military Police prior to attendance to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1994, since his commissioning, Maj. Zeller has served in numerous specialist appointments in Northern Ireland, with the RMP Special Investigations Branch in Britain and at the UK Permanent Joint HQ as one of the planners for offensive operations in Iraq. Most recently, he was an MP Company Commander with the British Forces at the Joint HQ, Rheindahlen, Germany. Maj. Zeller’s previous operational experience includes; Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and NATO support to the African Union Mission in the Sudan. His qualifications include a Graduatehip in Leadership and Management and a Certificate in Risk and Safety Management. Additionally, he has attended General Staff Course at the Baltic Defence College, Estonia and the Russian UFICYP Course at the Vystrel Academy, Moscow.

John Nash left Aberdeen in 1988 and joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) as a vehicle mechanic. In his career as vehicle mechanic was short-lived, however, as his Coy 2IC – although happy to support his forthcoming marriage to Julie - was adamant that he would not be accommodated with his family at Bordon whilst completing 12 to 18 months of trade training. Unhappy with this option, he elected to change trade to the shortest course run by REME, that of REME Clerk. Following a mere four weeks training at Worthy Down, he was posted to Menden, Germany and was soon joined by wife Julie and two children Richard (now 22) and Samantha (now 20). With the arrival of their third child Daniel (now 17), they enjoyed a further five postings within Germany and single postings to England, Northern Ireland and the Netherlands.

During John’s time in the Army, Julie has maintained an infectious zest for life, learned to drive and completed a parachute course. She now hopes to join up on news with them serving in peacekeeping missions in the Balkans, both as a soldier and as a civilian. Reinie is married to Kawai, whom he met in Cyprus in 1994. Reinie’s hobbies include motorcycling (he bought his Honda CB 750 over from Austria), travelling, swimming and hiking. Having spent so much time in Cyprus, he has many friends, so now he is catching up on news with them all.

He was born in Port Huacucha, Arizona, USA. He grew up in a military family and lived in Georgia (USA), Germany and the Republic of Korea. His family finally returned to the U.S. to settle in New Jersey. Allen joined in the US Army from 1993 until 1998 as a military policeman. He joined the UN in 1999 as Security Officer and carried out duties as the Desk Officer, Security Control Centre, the Adjunct Firearms Instructor in the Strategic Planning Unit, Information Services Unit, Security Trainer/Firearms Instructor in the Emergency Response Team (as a lead officer of September 11, 2001), Senior Security Officer, Middle East Monitor Unit and Senior Security Officer in the Strategic Planning Unit.

His hobbies include motorcycling, travel, music, cooking, computers and reading Tom Clancy books. Allen is married to Juana, and they have one son, Jalen.

Matthew Walker, the new MA to the Force Commanding Officer and the new MA to the Force Commanding Officer, arrived in UNFICYP on 11 July. He has just arrived from staff college where he completed nine months’ staff training.

Maj. Matt Walker, the new MA to the Force Commander arrived in July. He is not new to the island, having spent 18 months in Episkopi Garrison as his Regiment’s Training Officer. His hobbies include triathlon, sub aqua diving, skiing and mountaineering.

Nick enjoyed most sports, particularly boxing and rugby, but is no longer involved competitively. He now enjoys coaching and hopes to run boxercise lessons for various groups in the near future.

He was born on 28 January 1971 in Belfast, Northern Ireland, Maj. Lain Watt enlisted in the British Army in 1990, serving as an NCO within the Royal Military Police prior to attendance to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1994. Since his commissioning, Maj. Watt has served in numerous specialist appointments in Northern Ireland, with the RMP Special Investigations Branch in Britain and at the UK Permanent Joint HQ as one of the planners for offensive operations in Iraq. Most recently, he was an MP Company Commander with the British Forces at the Joint HQ, Rheindahlen, Germany. Maj. Watt’s previous operational experience includes; Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and NATO support to the African Union Mission in the Sudan. His qualifications include a Graduatehip in Leadership and Management and a Certificate in Risk and Safety Management. Additionally, he has attended General Staff Course at the Baltic Defence College, Estonia and the Russian UFICYP Course at the Vystrel Academy, Moscow.

His hobbies include his guitar, sports (if there is a ball anywhere), Visits Coordinator and watching most sporting events. He also enjoys motorcycling (he bought his Honda CB 750 over from Austria), travelling, swimming and hiking. After spending so much time in Cyprus, he has many friends, so now he is catching up on news with them all.

Al has spent six years away from home. This two-year tour with UNFICYP is therefore a bonus for him and his family. Al’s wife Tracey and son Thomas (six) are with him in Cyprus. So too is the fourth member of the Carter family, expected to arrive in January. Al enjoys swimming, golf, mountain biking and motorcycling. He and Tracey also enjoy this active social life. Here in sunny Cyprus, he should be able to pursue this interests without any problem!

The highlights of his career thus far have been his tours on the exchange programme with the US Army at Fort Eustis, Virginia, in the 1990s and, of course, his tour in Cyprus, having previously served as OC of the Joint Service Port Unit at Limassol New Port until August 2005.

Nick was awarded the MBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List in 2000 for his work in support of the operational deployment to Kosovo the previous year and was commissioned from the ranks in the same year.

Nick completed the three-year post to Northern Ireland followed by his posting to Cyprus in the rank of Captain. He has since returned on an Autumn tour, during which he led the support to the United Nations with a substantive role. He now holds as Inventory and Supply Officer for the United Nations Command Unit, which he took over on 1 June. Nick has been a key player in the medical sector. His hobbies include his guitar, sports (if there is a ball anywhere), Visits Coordinator and watching most sporting events. He also enjoys motorcycling (he bought his Honda CB 750 over from Austria), travelling, swimming and hiking. After spending so much time in Cyprus, he has many friends, so now he is catching up on news with them all.

Maj. Simon King has replaced Maj. Mark Grieveson at HQ BRITCON. His new duties at UNFICYP will include support to the UN Mission in the former Yugoslavia. His hobbies include his guitar, sports (if there is a ball anywhere), Visits Coordinator and watching most sporting events. He also enjoys motorcycling (he bought his Honda CB 750 over from Austria), travelling, swimming and hiking. After spending so much time in Cyprus, he has many friends, so now he is catching up on news with them all.

The new ForceProvost Marshal and OC BRITCON is Maj. Iain Watt, formerly OC BRITCON for Command Group and Joint Operations (CJOPS) in Kabul, Afghanistan. The new MA to the Force Commander is Maj. Simon King, who has just arrived from Kosovo.

Nick was awarded the MBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List in 2000 for his work in support of the operational deployment to Kosovo the previous year and was commissioned from the ranks in the same year.

Nick completed the three-year posting to Northern Ireland followed by his posting to Cyprus in the rank of Captain. He comes to UNFICYP on a four-month tour, after having served for one year at HQ Land Command in Salisbury, England. Nick enjoys all sports (if there is a ball involved), reading and traveling.

Jonathan Vatikiotis arrived in Cyprus from Greece a few months ago. After leaving school, Jonathan (22) studied music in Manchester for four years with the intention of becoming a professional musician. During his studies, he did a work placement and was impressed with his way as a restaurant manager - qualities required for the position he now holds as Inventory and Supply Officer for UNFICYP. He took over on 1 June.

Jonathan’s father comes from Athens and his mother’s family hails from Achna in the Famagusta area. Jonathan is engaged to Niki, and they hope to marry in a couple of years. His hobbies include his guitar, sports (if there is a ball anywhere), Visits Coordinator and watching most sporting events. He also enjoys motorcycling (he bought his Honda CB 750 over from Austria), travelling, swimming and hiking. After spending so much time in Cyprus, he has many friends, so now he is catching up on news with them all.

Jonathan enjoyed most sports, particularly boxing and rugby, but is no longer involved competitively. He now enjoys coaching and hopes to run boxercise lessons for various groups in the near future.

Sgt. Al Carter enlisted into The Royal Corps of Transport in December 1988. During his military career, Al has served four tours in Northern Ireland, one in Bosnia, one in Iraq and also carried out exercises in Oman and Canada. This is Al’s first peacekeeping mission.

During his 18 years in the military, Al has spent six years away from home. This two-year tour with UNFICYP is therefore a bonus for him and his family. Al’s wife Tracey and son Thomas (six) are with him in Cyprus. So too is the fourth member of the Carter family, expected to arrive in January. Al enjoys swimming, golf, mountain biking and motorcycling. He and Tracey also enjoy this active social life. Here in sunny Cyprus, he should be able to pursue his interests without any problem!

He was born in Port Huacucha, Arizona, USA. He grew up in a military family and lived in Georgia (USA), Germany and the Republic of Korea. His family finally returned to the U.S. to settle in New Jersey. Allen joined in the US Army from 1993 until 1998 as a military policeman. He joined the UN in 1999 as Security Officer and carried out duties as the Desk Officer, Security Control Centre, the Adjunct Firearms Instructor in the Strategic Planning Unit, Information Services Unit, Security Trainer/Firearms Instructor in the Emergency Response Team (as a lead officer of September 11, 2001), Senior Security Officer, Middle East Monitor Unit and Senior Security Officer in the Strategic Planning Unit.

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Resupplying UNIFIL