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Tel: (02) 864550/864416/864408 Fax: (02) 864461 E-mail: blueberetcypress@hotmail.com Web site: www.unficyp.org

Editorial Team
Brian Kelly
Maj. Drossis Kiss
Miriam Taylor
Photography
MScgt. Michal Zurbala
Contingent Photographers
Unit Press Officers
Sector 1 Maj. Alejandro Alvarez
Sector 2 Capt. Aina Fox
Sector 4 Lt. Lubos Klíma
UNCYPOL Gaida Martin Hennigan
Capt. Romeo Geygyak
UN FIH Capt. Fernando Valentin
MPFR Capt. Fernando Mendez
FMPU ULT Gerard Verhoest

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Challenges in a New World

The United Nations and Secretary-General Kofi Annan will receive the Nobel Peace Prize for Peace in Oslo in December, the close of a turbulent last quarter in this troubling year 2001. During these past three months we have learned the undemocratic potentiality of the UN, which had come increasingly into its own since the end of the Cold War, face new and unprecedented challenges.

When we turned the corner of the 21st-century, expectations were high, buoyed by the much-heralded panacea of globalization. Everyone’s vessel -- literal or liner -- was supposed to float a little higher as the economic waters of prosperity spread.

But, as we all know, the world we live in changed on September 11th. Three months ago, who would have thought the Blue Beret would be running an article on how to deal with the threat of anthrax? It just underscores how a sense of fragility and vulnerability now imbue even the most routine of our activities.

True, the international community is making a determined drive to forge the against the undemocratic forces of stealth and terrorism.

But the Secretary-General has said the UN is the common house of humankind in its entirety. If we are to preserve this house, we must be sure to address the underlying grievances that can fester in a climate of neglect where only poverty and want flourish. The struggle for human dignity and human security must go forward hand in hand. Otherwise, we are all the losers.

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Q. What is anthrax?
A. Anthrax is caused by a bacterium called Bacillus anthracis. It has existed for hundreds of years and still occurs naturally in both animals and humans in many parts of the world. It is found in southern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Australia. Anthrax bacteria can survive in the environment by forming spores. In its most common natural form, it creates dark sores on the skin, from which it derives its name (anthrax is Greek for coal).

Q. How can I find out what’s happening right now?
A. The World Health Organisation posts updated situation reports on its website (www.who.int) whenever there is an outbreak of anthrax or any other infectious disease.

Q. How could I be infected by anthrax?
A. There are three ways of contracting anthrax, each with different symptoms:

- Cutaneous, or skin, anthrax is the most common form. It is usually contracted when a person with a break in their skin, such as a cut or abrasion, comes into direct contact with anthrax spores. The resulting itchy bump rapidly develops into a black sore. Some people can then develop headaches, muscle aches, fever and vomiting. Cutaneous anthrax must be treated quickly. Appropriate medical evaluation and treatment are essential.

- Gastrointestinal anthrax is caught from eating meat from infected animals. The resulting illness can cause severe abdominal pain, vomiting of blood and severe diarrhea. Appropriate medical evaluation and treatment are essential. The most severe form of human anthrax is called inhalation or pulmonary anthrax. Though the rarest, it is the most dangerous. Human anthrax causing the most current concern. It is caused when a person is directly exposed to a large number of anthrax spores suspended in the air, and breathe them in. The first symptoms are similar to those of a common cold, but this can rapidly progress to severe breathing difficulties and shock. Appropriate medical evaluation and treatment are essential.

- Inhalation anthrax cannot be transmitted from person to person. Therefore, there is no need to worry about catching the disease from anyone else. In the case of cutaneous anthrax, there is a small risk of direct infection from the lesions on another person’s body.

Q. Do I have to go to a hospital to get tests?
A. Any doctor or medical practitioner is trained to diagnose infectious diseases and has access to the necessary tests. If required, you will be given the tests you need. It is not necessary to go to a hospital.

Q. What constitutes a suspicious letter or parcel?
A. Some typical characteristics that ought to trigger suspicion include letters or parcels that:

- Have any powdery substance on the outside.
- Are unexpected or from someone unfamiliar to you.
- Have excessive postage, handwritten or poorly typed address, incorrect size or titles with no name, or misspellings of common words.
- Are addressed to someone no longer at your workplace or home, or are otherwise outdated.
- Have no return address, or have one that can’t be verified as legitimate.
- Are of unusual weight, given their size, or are lopsided or oddly shaped.
- Have an unusual amount of tape.
- Are marked with restrictive endorsements, such as “Personal” or “Confidential.”
- Have strange odours or stains.

Q. What should I do if I receive an anthrax threat by mail?
A. Do not handle the mail piece or package suspected of containing anthrax.
- Make sure that damaged or suspicious packages are isolated and the immediate area cordoned off.
- Ensure that all persons who have touched the mail piece wash their hands with soap and water.
- List all persons who have touched the letter and/or envelope.
- Include contact information and have this information available for the authorities.
- Place all items worn when in contact with the suspected material in plastic bags and have them available for authorities.
- As soon as practical, shower with soap and water.
- Contact the: JOE (Ext: 4555), Force Medical Officer (Ext 4597), and Force Hygiene Officer (Ext 4534)

In this Blue Beret:

The Facts on Anthrax

Following the recent outbreak of anthrax, and the threat of more such outbreaks, in various parts of the globe, the World Health Organisation has circulated details on how to fight the disease and on the protective measure to be taken. HQ UNFICYP has distributed similar circulars covering the points below:

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Nobel Peace Prize for 2001 Awarded to the United Nations and Secretary-General Kofi Annan

The only negotiable route to global peace and cooperation approved by a major world body – Nobel Committee, 12 October 2001

On 12 October, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced that the Nobel Peace Prize for 2001 was to be given to the United Nations and to its Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. This is the first time in the Committee’s 100-year history that the Peace Prize has been awarded to an organization as an entity, and only the second time that it has recognized a UN Secretary-General.

By announcing the award just one month after the terrorist attacks on the United States, the Nobel Committee made it clear it was recognizing the efforts of the UN and Mr. Annan to ensure a better and more peaceful world.

The end of the cold war has at last made it possible for the UN to perform more fully the part it was originally intended to play,” the Committee said.

Today, the organization is at the forefront of efforts to achieve peace and security in the world, and of the international mobilization aimed at meeting the world’s economic, social and environmental challenges.

For 100 years, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has sought to strengthen organized cooperation between states, recognizing the wishes of leadership Alfred Nobel, the award’s benefactor, that prizes should be given to those who have conferred the greatest benefit on mankind, including one for the best work towards fraternity between nations.

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson noted the Peace Prize’s long history. “For 100 years, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has recognized the work of the United Nations. This is the first time it has given the Peace Prize to an organization as an entity.”

For his action in strengthening the UN, Mr. Annan joined the UN system as an administrative and budget officer with the WHO. Mr. Annan then joined the UN system in 1993 when he was serving as Poland’s ambassador to the UN, and Mr. Annan was Under-Secretary-General heading the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Mr. Annan joined the UN system as an administrative and budget officer with the WHO. Since then, he has served various of the UN’s bodies, including nations Economic Commission for Africa, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

In June 2001, recognising his achievements as Secretary-General in such diverse fields as organisational renewal and conflict resolution, the General Assembly appointed Mr. Annan by acclamation to a second term, ending 31 December 2006.

The United Nations system has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on five previous occasions: in 1988, to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations; in 1954 and 1981, to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; in 1965, to the United Nations Children’s Fund; and in 1969, to the International Labour Organisation. In addition, the UN’s second Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld, was awarded the prize posthumously in 1961, for his action in strengthening the UN.

Towards Peace

On 12 October 2001, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, spoke to the press about the awarding of the 100th Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations. These are his remarks.

[The Nobel Peace Prize] is truly an honour for the whole United Nations -- its Member States, the General Assembly and the Security Council, and especially its dedicated staff around the world. They work hard every day to make the world a more just, more peaceful, and happier place. Many of them are risking their lives. They richly deserve this award.

A year ago, world leaders at the Millennium Summit reaffirmed the indispensable role of the United Nations as the common house of the entire humankind. In a world which is growing ever closer and more interconnected, and is yet still torn by brutal conflict and cruel injustice, this role is ever more important.

All of us who work for the United Nations should be proud today -- but also be humbled because even more will be expected of us in the future.

Mr. Annan is the first Secretary-General to be elected from the ranks of UN staff, and began his term in office on 1 January 1997. It was the culmination of a UN career that began in 1962, when Mr. Annan joined the UN system as an administrative and budget officer with the WHO. Since then, he has served various of the UN’s bodies, including nations Economic Commission for Africa, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

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The Guirins

By Maj. A. Alvarez

Missing family back home is an emotion shared by most mission personnel. For two of Sector 1’s personnel, the challenges are rather different: the Guirins have been married for 18 months, and by happy coincidence are both posted to ARGCOn in UNFICYP.

2/Lt. Elizabeth Barvoza de Guirin is a professional nurse who works in San Martin Camp’s Medical Centre. Her husband, 2/Lt. Cristian Guirin, works in the Logistics Branch as Transport Officer for Sector 1.

Back home in Argentina, in keeping with Army regulations dealing with military marriages, the couple work in different units within the same garrison. There, Elizabeth works at the Military Hospital and Cristian with the 9th Mechanised Signals Coy, both located in Comodoro Rivadavia, a windy town on the Patagonian coast in southern Argentina.

In Cyprus, the couple’s working days begin in Evrachou, where they rent a small apartment. They wake up at 6:00 am to be at the 7:30 am morning parade. After a vigorous half-hour of gymnastics, they go their separate ways to Logistics and to the Medical Centre. They meet up again at lunchtime. Their return to the apartment depends on their jobs: Elizabeth is often on duty, while Cristian often works outside the camp, arriving late.

“All in all this has been a great experience, mostly because all we had to think about was ourselves and our work,” says Elizabeth of the posting to UNFICYP. The shared posting also enabled them to fulfil a life-long dream trip to the Middle East and Egypt. The only drawback has been poor communication with their families in Argentina. Even this, however, has brought them closer.

“Absolutely, we would recommend the mission for a couple, though it would be better without children, as with ourselves,” they agree.

They are returning to Argentina with a sense of fulfilment, leaving behind many friends and looking forward to a personal and professional life that is just beginning.

Mucking In Together

On 25 September, Sector 2 joined forces with Anglanzia Municipality and the National Guard to clean up their area of responsibility within the Buffer Zone, where there has been a lot of illegal dumping over the past few years.

Troops from the United Nations, including S2 East and SCAT (Sector Civil Affairs Team) personnel, worked with soldiers from the National Guard’s 212th Battalion, and were assisted by two HGVs and a JCB provided by the Anglanzia Municipality. The multinational team worked hard throughout the morning and managed to clear four truckloads of rubbish: the improvement to the area was substantial and all are to be congratulated for their cooperative efforts.

New DCO Sector 4

Lt. Col. Zoltan Horvath

Sector 4’s new DCO, Lt. Col. Zoltan Horvath, is no stranger to UNFICYP. From 1997 to 1999 he served as S02 Pers in UNFICYP HQ, and says that it is always a pleasure to meet former colleagues.

He notes many changes, including material improvements to roads, buildings, patrol tracks and kitchen equipment, plus the proliferation of electronic communication devices such as mobile phones and e-mail. “I cannot forget the changes in the Hungarian Contingent,” he says. “When we came here in 1995 we were

Visits to UNFICYP

During September and October, Headquarters UNFICYP welcomed a number of visitors to the Force.

Among those received by Chief of Mission Zbigniew Wlosowicz and Force Commander Maj.Gen. Victory Rana was European Commission President Romano Prodi (far right), who arrived on the 26 October at the Ledra Palace. The EU party, which included Commissioner Günter Verheugen (left), was escorted on a Green Line tour and were briefed on the tasks of British soldiers on the line.

High Commissioner of India to Cyprus, His Excellency Mr. Pavan K. Vama (left), paid a courtesy call to HQ UNFICYP on 13 September.

Gen. Sir Alex Harley KBE CB (right), Master Gunner at St James’s Park, visited UNFICYP on 18 September.

This was not Gen. Sir Alex’s first visit to Cyprus. In 1993, he served as the Administrative Officer of the Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus (as the Queen’s representative) and the Joint Service Commander of the British Forces in Cyprus. His programme included a visit to Sector 2.

Mr. Michael Smith, Irish Minister for Defence (right), visited UNFICYP on 29 and 30 September.

Having travelled from the Lebanon and Damascus, he visited HQ UNFICYP as well as Sectors 1 and 2, where he was given briefings and escorted on line tours in the buffer zone.

Mr. Lyn Parker (left), the new British High Commissioner in Cyprus, visited UNFICYP on 3 October.

As well as meeting members of the Headquarters staff, Mr. Parker visited Sector 2 where he received a briefing and was conducted on a Green Line Tour.
They say that for 354 days of the year, it’s sunny in Cyprus. Well, that was definitely the case on Sunday 21 October, when the gates of Ledra Palace were opened to the public between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. to celebrate United Nations Day (24 October).

It is estimated that well over 7,000 Cypriots and visitors from north and south of the buffer zone entered the Ledra Palace grounds and spent the day together, recognizing the UN’s 56th birthday and the highlight of UNFICYP’s social calendar. This is a new attendance record for the day. To give you an idea of this accomplishment, consider this -- 15,000 people visited the Palais des Nations in Geneva, the UN’s Headquarters in Europe, over two days.

Here at our own Ledra Palace, Chief of Mission Zbigniew Włosowicz opened the event after a march of children with UN flags. He welcomed everyone, “especially the children of the island,” to a very special United Nations Day, which this year has added meaning “since the recently announced award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the UN and to our Secretary-General Kofi Annan”.

Hundreds of UN staff, civilian and military, spent months preparing for the day, and were rightly happy that Cypriots and visitors of all ages spent their Sunday enjoying the music and a variety of activities in such a friendly atmosphere.

At the end of the day, Ledra Palace’s swimming pool area became the venue for an outstanding concert of classical music performed by internationally-acclaimed artists of Cypriot origin. Returning home especially for the occasion, Martino Tirimo (piano), Turgay Hilmi (French horn) and Harris Hadjigeorgiou (violin) joined the Cyprus Fulbright Ensemble led by Artistic Director Peter Sulski in a recital of excerpts from works by Brahms, Britten, Mozart and Schumann. The concert concluded with the singers Katie Economomidou and Erol Refikoğlu performing traditional songs from the two communities.

UN Day at Ledra Palace is now a Cyprus tradition -- an open house where everyone is welcome and everyone feels comfortable. Whether or not visitors stayed for the concert, they left with gift packages including a pen, cap and mug -- all carrying UNFICYP’s logo -- as a small reminder of their special UN Day.
A Scenic Day in Sector 1

I was recently invited to visit San Martin Camp, to see something outside UNFICYP Headquarters in Nicosia, and to get a tour of the buffer zone in the Argentinian area of responsibility on the island.

Thanks to Sgt. Mario Bosco. our tour guide from the Civil Affairs Team, it was a great day. Argentinians are fantastic hosts: so hospitable, friendly and accommodating. We could never leave a camp, an OP or a cabin without being offered something to drink and eat.

Our tour started with a visit to OP 18, where we were met by eight soldiers, all standing in line, saluting us - this is not the sort of greeting that I am most often met with, so I loved it. We were invited into their accommodation, which turned out to be a very small house. My daughter noticed that there were only six beds -- obviously, two of the peacekeepers must be on duty throughout the night. The kitchen was barely a kitchen and I won’t even get into their bathroom facilities!

When we were invited up in the OP tower, we of course went along, but, boy, are some of those towers tall! I felt every step to the top, and when I finally reached the dizzying heights, I immediately started dreading having to go back down. But the view overlooking the valleys, the mountains and Morphou Bay was fabulous -- it was a clear, beautiful day and I believe we could see the Turkish coastline.

“Mi casa es tu casa” says OP 18

We continued our buffer zone touring, including a short break at Camp Brown, where we had lunch and enjoyed again the same warmth and friendliness. It’s no surprise that the Argentinians have a worldwide reputation for their hospitality.

Despite five hours in a UN vehicle on dirt roads and bumpy mountain tracks, it was worth it all, for the magnificent scenery, some rare sightings of moufflons, and of course the welcome we received. At the end of the day, we came back to San Martin Camp for a refreshing dip in the pool.

I was left with the feeling that the Argentinians have succeeded in making themselves a home away from home, in their camp at the foot of the Troodos Mountains.

October 2001 - The Blue Beret
Drinking and Driving will not be tolerated, and any military/civilian/CIVPOL member of UNFICYP found guilty of drinking and driving may be repatriated.

Section 4, Part 1, paragraph 16 is very clear about impaired driving. UNFICYP found guilty of drinking and driving may be repatriated. UNFICYP SOP, Chapter 3, Part 2, Section 4, paragraph 16 is very clear about impaired driving. Your ability to react to events and situations will be severely affected, which decreases your ability to stop the vehicle. Your judgement of the overall risk will be affected, making you over-confident in your ability to drive, resulting in putting yourself, your passengers, or others at risk. “I am a better driver after a couple of pints” is simply not true.

“What are the legal consequences if I am caught?” In the UK, for example, if you are found to be over the legal limit, you can be fined up to £2,500 sterling, be disqualified for at least six months, and be jailed for up to three months (disqualification begins when you are released from prison). If you refuse to, or because of the amount of alcohol you have consumed, you are unable to provide a sample of breath, the fine is increased to £5,000 sterling, you may be jailed for up to six months, and disqualified for at least one year. Most other countries throughout the world have similar, or even harsher penalties than the UK. Within the UN, your problems will start with your likely repatriation home, in disgrace.

“I had to take my car - there was no other way to get there and back.” This is an annoying excuse, heard all too often. Arrange for someone who is not drinking to drive. Take a taxi, stay overnight, use unit transport, or even try walking! Try any of these, but do not drink and drive. If you are arranging a unit function, why not also arrange unit transport to stop your colleagues drinking and driving? Never buy an alcoholic drink for a person who knows he is driving.

“I went to a barbecue last night, and I have to work today. I have had a good night’s sleep and a cup of coffee. I’ll be okay to drive.” Possibly, but consider this: if you go to bed at midnight, after an evening’s drinking, you may have 110 ug of alcohol per 100 ml of breath, well over the limit! You go to bed, and wake up at 7 a.m., when there may still be 50 ug of alcohol per 100 ml of breath in your system. You are still over the legal limit. By lunchtime, your body has continued to expel the alcohol, and has reduced your amount to only 20 ug. Consider this: if you go to bed at midnight, after an evening’s drinking, you may have 110 ug of alcohol per 100 ml of breath, well over the limit! You go to bed, and wake up at 7 a.m., when there may still be 50 ug of alcohol per 100 ml of breath in your system. You are still over the legal limit. By lunchtime, your body has continued to expel the alcohol, and has reduced your amount to only 20 ug. Although this is now technically below the legal limit (unless driving UN Vehicles), your ability to drive may still be affected. It is impossible to speed up alcohol elimination. Cold showers, strong coffee, Red Bull, or other ways of sobering up do not work. Time is the only way of reducing your alcohol content.

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“Don’t drink and drive. Leave your vehicle at home (or wherever you have been drinking) and sober up. Have a safe and alcohol-free journey.”

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On a Philosophical Note...

A philosophy professor stood before his class and had some items in front of him. When class began, wordlessly he picked up a large empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with rocks right to the top, rocks about 2” diameter. He then asked the students if the jar was full? They agreed that it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them in to the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles represent things like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your energy and time on the small stuff, material things, you will never have room for the things that are truly most important. Pay attention to the things that are critical in your life. Set your priorities. The rest is just pebbles and sand.”

Caption Competition

Well now, readers, we ARE improving. This issue, we have several entries for the caption competition, and some are so funny that we have listed them below.

“Now,” said the professor, “I want you to recognise that this is your life. The rocks are the important things -- your family, your partner, your health, your children -- anything that is so important to you that if it were lost, you would be nearly destroyed. The pebbles are the other things in life that matter, but on a smaller scale. The pebbles represent things like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your energy and time on the small stuff, material things, you will never have room for the things that are truly most important. Pay attention to the things that are critical in your life. Play with your children. Take your partner out dancing. There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party and fix the disposal. There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party and fix the disposal. Take care of the rocks first -- the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just pebbles and sand.”

MFR Outflanked by Sector 1

The MFR football team opened their 13 September challenge game with Sector 1 by putting the opposing team under immediate pressure, scoring a goal within the first minute of play. Sector 1 quickly rebounded, however, and put the MFR back on the small stuff and turned the game in their favour, with the first half ending 1-1. In the second half, Sector 1 moved the ball to both flanks, setting up very good attacks that produced a 5-1 final result.

Six of the Best

On 16 September, the “14th Annual International Running Contest” took place in the Village of Agros. The 7km race was organized by the Achilles Agrou Athletic Club and the Cyprus Amateur Running Club Perikles Demetriou. Thirty-three ARGCON members joined the challenging event, with six finishing in the top three in their respective age group: Pet. Quequpo third in the 20/29 age group; Lt. G. V. Vara third in the 35/39 age group; WO2 Moyano second and WO2 Vazquez third in the 40/45 age group; and WO2 Mamani and Li. Col. Patoco third in the 46/50 age group. Well done all!

Why Keep Score?

Football matches between Sector 4’s Hungarian and Slovak teams started almost immediately after SLOVCOM arrived on the island. On 3 October, however, Camp General Stefanik in Fama-gusta witnessed a match with a significant change. Hungarians and Slovaks created a joint team and played against a local telephone company team. Sector 4 set the pace early scoring several times. In the best sports spirit, both sides played well and nobody was able to provide a final score. The player of the day, scoring the most goals, was Maj. Matej. Sector 4’s senior logistic officer. The Co and DCO Sector 4 invited all players to the officers club, where rumour has it that discussion about the final score – which no one kept track of – lasted late into the night.

Golfers Land on Moon!

On 12 and 13 October, the Ballantines Open Golf Competition, played over 36 holes, attracted island golfers with handicaps ranging from 3 to 21. Capt. J.J. Simon of Ops Branch -- who only began to play golf two years ago -- won the best net with a 130 net score over the two days. Other UNFICYP/UNCIVPOL prize winners included Maj. Gen. V. Rana, Lt. Col. M. Farragher and Sgt. D. Sheedy.

No Game is Easy!

The UN opened their hockey league account on 14 October with a fight against the “Saxons” from Episkopi. Wearing their newly sponsored kit from KEGO, the UN side looked for a match for anyone: with some slick passing, it was soon 2-0 to the UN. With a quick counter-attack, the Saxons were back in the game, however with the score reaching 5-2 to the Saxons before the UN side began to show their spirit in the face of adversity, reaching a final score of 5-4 to the Saxons.

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1. Synchronised swimming -- easy to do on your own.
2. We all live in a yellow submarine -- and you don’t!
3. The great white shark’s eye view of an appetizer, entrée and dessert (Charles -- come and collect your prize!)
4. Nothing like a nice big cup of water on a hot day...
5. We all held our breath for the arrival of the October 2001 - The Blue Beret