El Salvador joins UNPOL

Whirling Dervishes Perform
The Blue Beret

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Change and Farewell

With the impending departure of Chief of Mission Wlosowicz (see pages 9-10) and the arrival of new SRSG Michael Moller, 2005 comes to an end on a note of change. We will have advanced more than a week into the New Year when Force Commander Maj. Gen. Heber Figoli also departs the mission to return to his native Uruguay at the end of his two-year assignment in Cyprus.

On the page opposite, both outward bound Chief of Mission and Force Commander salute UNFICYP staff – civilian, military and police – in year-end goods wishes to all and to their families.

Both attest to how privileged and fortunate they have been in leading the Force throughout these recent dynamic years.

The island they depart is distinctly different from that which greeted them when each first arrived. Force 860 is now a fact of everyday mission life as we successfully downsized the peacekeeping force by 30% to implement the new concept of operations in all its mobile modes and multiple patrols.

Recent controversy notwithstanding, crossing points have opened, easing the freedom of movement restrictions, which for so long kept the two communities apart. Millions of crossings have taken place from south to north and north to south without incident.

Protracted mine-clearance negotiations led to the successful launch of de-mining operations on both sides of the buffer zone. Today and every day, UNFICYP works closely with the demining cell and with EU and UNDP’s PFS in pursuit of a mine-free buffer zone.

These are a part of the Wlosowicz/Figoli legacy. We wish them good luck and good fortune in their new assignments.

In my final note of the Blue Beret, I wish to thank all of you with this simple message: “Thank you, UNFICYP.” The Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Heber Figoli

Chief of Mission
Zbigniew Wlosowicz

Dear Colleagues,

I want to take this opportunity to tell you that, despite all we have achieved, we have not forgotten the people who, for so many years, have been an integral part of this team and who I have been privileged to work with.

On behalf of my wife and son, we extend our best wishes to all our friends and colleagues in UNFICYP for a prosperous New Year. God Bless.

Chief Administrative Officer, Francis Clancy

Year-end Greetings

Greetings and my very best wishes to you all in the coming year. In my final note for the Blue Beret, I would like to express my thanks to all who have served as your Chief of Mission. Indeed, I find it difficult to give up a five and a half-year term that I am sorry to leave this position and this island.

I remain hopeful for Cyprus and confident in UNFICYP. Experience has taught me that the path to finding a Cyprus solution is a difficult one. It is a path that we have to work around the ground for a solution to a new and capable team of leaders.

Many of you know that I first started working on the Cyprus issue while I was a student in graduate school. My doctoral dissertation involved attempting to lead an effective team of UN staff, military, civilian and police through a very challenging period in Cyprus’s long history.

It has been a rewarding and educational experience that I will recall fondly as I depart for other opportunities.

This past year has provided its own series of challenges, only the latest of which is the dispute over the Ledra Street crossing. But I have seen time and again that the UNFICYP team holds its head high and faces any problems with eyes open and minds alert. You can be proud to be an effective team of peacekeepers, as I am proud to have seen and to have experienced the visible changes that we have achieved.

I wish to extend a special thank you to Maj. Gen. Heber Figoli, our Force Commander, for his partnership this year.

Before I say farewell, or in Polish, zapalejmy az cieplo, please join me in welcoming UNFICYP’s new Chief of Mission, Michael Moller.

Moller will arrive in early January and the UNFICYP team will enter a New Year with confidence and peace.

Møller is a graduate of Maastricht University and has been a diplomat for many years. He was, until recently, the Mission’s Senior Political Officer. He will bring to the post a wealth of experience and a proven track record.

The Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Heber Figoli

On behalf of my wife and son, we extend our best wishes to all our friends and colleagues in UNFICYP for a prosperous New Year. God Bless.

Chief of Staff, Col. Peter Fraser-Hopewell

Front Cover: Whirling Dervishes perform the Sema ceremony
Back Cover: UNPOL’s Salvadoran flag-raising

December 2005 - The Blue Beret

For many, a holiday destination.

We remain hopeful for Cyprus and confident in UNFICYP.

It has been a rewarding and educational experience that I will recall fondly as I depart for other opportunities.

The Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Heber Figoli
SG’s Message on Human Rights Day

Fifty-seven years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights outlawed all forms of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, we remain acutely concerned. Recent times have witnessed an especially disturbing trend of countries claiming exceptions to the prohibition on torture and the denial of all security perceptions. “Let us be clear: torture can never be an instrument to combat the impunity of perpetrators of torture. Those who conceive of or authorize any form of torture, cruel or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and those who commit such acts, should not go unpunished. Nor may any State condone torture by a third party. This means that individuals must never be rendered to another State if there is any danger that they may suffer from torture.”

“The international community must speak forcefully, and with one voice, against torture in all forms. Today, I call on all States who have not done so to ratify the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as well as the Optional Protocol to the Torture Convention. And I urge all States to allow a Special Rapporteur on Torture independent access to detainees within their control. Unimpeded access is an essential protection for these individuals, whose isolation makes them especially vulnerable. We must give voice, and redress, to abused detainees as well as to all victims and survivors of torture.”

“Humanity faces grave challenges today. The threat of terror is real and immediate. Yet fear of terrorists can never justify adopting methods that are, or have come to be, compliant about the broader prevalence of cruel and inhuman punishment, which in so many of our societies disproportionately affects the weakest people: the imprisoned, the politically powerless and the economically deprived. Instead, we must respond to this evil wherever we find it reaffirming humanity’s most basic values.”

“Today, on Human Rights Day, let us recommit ourselves to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and let us rededicate ourselves to wiping the scourge of torture from the face of the earth.”

SG’s Message on World AIDS Day

December 1 was World AIDS Day. In his message, the Secretary-General contrasted the progress and promises made over the past 15 years, after the time he said the time has come to keep the promise. Today, we have about $8 billion dollars available for AIDS efforts in developing countries annually – compared to $300 million a decade ago. Today, the national AIDS response in some 40 countries is led by their deputies or Government themselves. Today, AIDS is a familiar item for discussion in the General Assembly and the Security Council. We see new signs of progress in almost every region of the world. We have real evidence that AIDS is a problem with a solution. We have a clear plan of action to halt and reverse the spread of AIDS.

At the World Summit held at the United Nations in September 2000, leaders committed to implement the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted in 2001, by scaling up efforts for prevention, treatment, care and support so that every person, with or without exception, has access to these life-saving programmes. Next year, we will review progress in implementing the Declaration. So this is a time to concentrate our minds. It is a time to recognize that although our response so far has succeeded in some of the particulars, it has yet to match the epidemic in scale. It is a time to remember the need to meet the Millennium Development Goal of halting and reversing the spread of AIDS by 2015, then we must do far, far more. That mission concerns every one of us. It is a prerequisite for reaching most of the others.

Today, let us make clear this is a time to keep the promise. On the World AIDS Day, I ask all of you to join me in that mission.

WinFire Safety

ALL FIRES CAN BE PREVENTED

1. Gas heaters are NOT to be used within sleeping accommodation buildings.
2. When using gas heaters, make sure that they are securely fixed and do not leak gas.
3. Never leave a functioning heater unattended.
4. Never plug electric heaters into extension leads or other circuits.
5. Never dry clothes near or over a heater.
6. Never move a heater when it is on/working.
7. Keep heaters at least 1.25 metres away from any combustible materials.
8. Empty gas cylinders must not be stored inside the building. Store them in the designated area.
9. Extend leads should be secured along a wall and not on the floor.
10. Never use the plug to make an extension lead.
11. Gas leak detector is installed in all accommodations. Any and all faulty equipment should be removed. Report any faulty equipment immediately.
12. In case of fire, please follow the instructions given.

What is HIV? The Human Immunodeficiency Virus, or HIV, attacks the body’s immune system. It weakens the body’s defences against disease and makes the body more vulnerable to a number of sexually transmitted infections and cancers.

What is AIDS? If left untreated HIV will almost always destroy the immune system. The body then becomes vulnerable to infections. This stage of HIV is called AIDS or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. The more the body’s system becomes damaged, the greater the risk of death from infection and/or disease.

**Contact UNFICYP Fire HQ (Ext: 4453/4)**
Crime Reduction & Safety of Personal Possessions

Cyprus has a relatively low level of crime compared to other countries. It is easy, therefore, for us to drop our guard and when we do that, we are much more likely to become a victim of crime, even here on the island of Aphrodite! In this first look at ways of promoting crime reduction, FMPU offers tips on ensuring the safety of your personal possessions. A thief only needs a moment to make off with your valuables. Your coat hung up in a restaurant, your mobile phone left on the bar while you pop to the loo, your briefcase beside your chair, even, your card left on the table while you pay the bill... all are vulnerable if you look away for a second. So try to be careful at all times.

Money and plastic cards

Don't make it easy for pickpockets! Carry your wallet in an inside pocket, preferably one which can be fastened – not your back pocket. If someone bumps into you in a crowd, see if you still have your wallet or purse. Cash is a favourite target for thieves, so try to avoid carrying large amounts.

When on leave or R&R, take travellers' cheques or cards. If your plastic card is stolen, tell the card company IMMEDIATELY. Keep the name, as a thief could make a claim by misusing your card. Thieves, so try to avoid carrying large amounts.

Keep mobile phones out of view from thieves

If your phone is stolen, the operator should then be able to bar the handset and the SIM card. Try not to use your phone in crowded areas where you feel unsafe and avoid displaying your phone in public view, where thieves can see it at a glance. Do not leave your phone unattended and keep it with you at all times.

Security marking both the battery and mobile phone is also a good idea. If you have a mobile phone network, thieves can sell stolen phones which can be used on any network, even if the SIM card is removed and replaced.

It is a good idea to record details about your phone and store them in a safe place:
- phone make and model
- fascia details (colour etc.)
- serial/IMEI number
- PIN number

Call the CSM for more Crime Reduction advice at the FMPU: 22.61.4667

On 9 December, over 120 guests gathered together at the conference rooms of the Ledra Palace Hotel to bid farewell to Pierre Guberan, Third Member i.e. of the Committee for Missing Persons.

Ambassadors, UNIFCYP senior staff, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Members of the CMP together with their assistants and representatives from both sides of the island listened to UNIFCYP Force Commander Maj.Gen. Hebert Figoli as he bade farewell to his Swiss friend and colleague after 20 years of service in Cyprus.

Maj.Gen. Figoli said that “I know Pierre, not only as a friend, but also as a man who drives a very hard bargain! That ability to drive a hard bargain comes from a great breadth of experience and a rich and varied career.” He stressed that Pierre Guberan has worked tirelessly in his endeavours to help all people of Cyprus. In doing so, he has earned the respect of his fellow colleagues of the Committee. He has faced many frustrations along the way, but he is a skilled negotiator. It is this blend of charm, tact and determination that many of us will remember most of all.

Pierre, you will be greatly missed by your friends and colleagues here in Cyprus. We wish you all the best in your retirement at home in Aubonne, Switzerland, together with your wife Janet and family.

UNPOL Remembers

On 12 November, a memorial service was held for deceased Austcivpol member Ian Donald Ward. The service, usually held annually on 29 September (Police Remembrance Day) was deferred this year because of AUSTCIVPOL staff changes during September.

Australian police have been serving with UNIFCYP since 1964. Ian Ward is one of three Australian police killed whilst serving in Cyprus.

The small service was conducted by the Deputy Senior Police Adviser, Col Speedie, and was attended by the Senior Police Adviser Carla Van Maris and members of the 82nd, 83rd and 84th Australian Contingents. Representatives from the Australian Federal Police which was delivered on Police Remembrance Day. He then touched on issues relating to the dangers of policing, no matter where officers serve, and reminded officers of the necessity to remain vigilant at all times, no matter what tasks were being performed. Following the service, Col thanked the Linou station staff for their ongoing commitment to maintaining the memorial site.
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End of Assignment

UNFICYP’s Chief of Mission Zbigniew Wlosowicz closes out five tumultuous years at the helm of one of the United Nations longest running missions. Tumultuous may seem an incongruous word to use when referring to the stewardship of a man known for a low-key, cautious approach to the day-to-day complexities of dealing with the Cyprus issue.

Zbig, as his friends call him, saw his role as that of stabilizer, assuring the optimum conditions for settlement talks, discharging his duties as the Secretary-General’s Special Representative on the island.

In the course of his five plus years with UNFICYP, Zbig saw the kick-off of the Annan Plan talks in January 2002 through to the 24 April 2004 referenda. During that time, he twice co-hosted visits by the Secretary-General to the island. In between, he witnessed the opening of the first crossing point on 23 April 2003 and helped lay the groundwork for four subsequent openings. Before the referendum, he helped prepare a contingency plan that would have doubled the Force’s size in the event of a settlement. Later, he helped conduct and implement a review of the UNPA that became essential in the case of two subsequent opening attempts.

In November 2004, he also helped launch the ongoing EU-funded, UN-executed buffer zone de-mining project. Other milestones in his time on island included the entry of the Republic of Cyprus into the European Union and the departure from leadership of two seminal figures in the Cyprus story, the Greek Cypriot leader Glafkos Clerides and the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, and the arrival of their successors Tassos Papadopoulos and Mehmet Ali Talat.

Zbig brought a wealth of experience to his new assignment. In May 2000, a former lecturer of international law, in his own student days at Cambridge he’d made a special study of the Cyprus problem. He arrived from New York where he had been advising UNDP on External Relations. Prior to that, he had served as Poland’s ambassador to the United Nations, one of the youngest, if not the youngest, to hold the presidency of the Security Council.

He quickly settled in. December 2001 saw the unprecedented meeting between the leaders of the two communities at his residence in the UNPA. Then came the announcement of the residence steps to some 300 media gathered outside in the rain that direct talks between the leaders would start early in the new year under UN auspices.

Over the next 28 months, there were the highs and lows of the negotiation process both on and off the island, including the Secretary-General’s visits in pursuit of a UN-brokered settlement between the two sides. On the first of those trips, the SG was accompanied by his wife Nane. On both occasions, Zbig’s mother was a significant behind-the-scenes figure. She presided over the residence kitchen, preparing and serving an array of sumptuous meals to a stream of high-level visitors and negotiators. Her “peace cookies” became the stuff of legend among the Cyprus media.

In the course of his assignment, Zbig entertained many luminaries and dignitaries ranging from the Presidents of Hungary (Mr. Madl Ferenc) and the Slovak Republic (Mr. Rudolf Šuster) to European Parliament President Borell.

But Zbig always had a special place in his heart for the island’s “leaders of tomorrow”, whether they were the school children who regularly visited the UNPA or those he encountered at bicommunal events such as the annual UN Day celebrations at Ledra Palace.

His athletic abilities also stood him in good stead as he took full advantage of all the island could offer by swimming, skiing, rollerblading, and mountain biking, depending on the season. Some learned to love his nightly jogging treks because they so often turned into impromptu inspections of the litter situation around the UNPA!

A year and a day before the referenda, the then Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash unilaterally announced the opening of the first crossing point on the island, effectively ending 29 years during which movement between the two sides had been restricted to the point of paralysis.

Mr. Denktash offered less than 24 hours notice of his intention to open that first crossing point by the Ledra Palace Hotel. Unfazed, UNFICYP, led by its Chief of Mission, met the challenge, coping with the thousands who thronged the buffer zone area in those initial days of what in retrospect can only be described as “organised chaos”.

Ironically, as the Chief of Mission prepares to depart, UNFICYP finds itself once again embroiled in the consequences of a unilateral attempt to open a crossing point. This time, the site is Ledra Street in the heart of the historic old town of Nicosia. Sadly, this time around, there has been no resolution as yet and it seems our Chief must end his tenure among us with an impasse.

We wish Zbig well in his future endeavours; whether in his native Poland or the United Nations, which he served so faithfully during his tenure in Cyprus.
SAFE TRAVELS

Now that we have launched ourselves on the party circuit, the transport unit would like to help us celebrate the festive season safely.

DRINKING BUT NOT DRIVING

Fact 1
On average, 3,000 people are killed or seriously injured each year in drink drive collisions.

Fact 2
Nearly one in six of all deaths on the road involve drivers who are over the legal alcohol limit.

Fact 3
Drinking and driving occurs across a wide range of age groups but particularly among young men aged 17-29 in both casualties and positive breath tests following a collision.

There is no failsafe guide as to how much you can drink and stay under the limit. It can depend on many factors such as the amount and type of alcoholic drink, your weight, sex, age, food intake and metabolism. The only safe option is not to drink any alcohol if you plan to drive and never offer an alcoholic drink to anyone else who is driving. Alcohol affects your ability to drive safely as your reaction and metabolism. The only safe option is not to drink any alcohol if you plan to drive. Alcohol affects your ability to drive safely as your reaction times are impaired and you're unable to judge speed and distances. People who drive at twice the current legal alcohol level are at least 50 times more likely to be involved in a fatal car crash. You cannot calculate your alcohol limit, so don’t try. Any amount of alcohol affects your ability to drive safely.

"NONE FOR THE ROAD"

"I had a drink but it was at lunchtime."
Even a small drink at lunchtime can make you more sleepy and impair your driving.

"I’m driving slowly and carefully."
Alcohol actually makes you less alert.

"I feel fine to drive."
Any amount of alcohol will affect your judgement.

"I’m only going down the road."
A large proportion of all drink drive crashes occur within three miles of the start of the journey.

THE MORNING AFTER

If you’ve been out drinking you may still be affected by alcohol the next day. You may feel OK, but you may still be unfit to drive or over the legal alcohol limit. You could still lose your licence if you drive the next day when you are still over the legal alcohol level. It’s impossible to get rid of alcohol any faster. A shower, a cup of coffee or other ways of “sobering up” will not help. It just takes time.

THE ONLY SAFE OPTION IS NOT TO DRINK IF WE PLAN TO DRIVE.

But if you decide to have a drink, use your common sense:
- Book a taxi
- Use public transport
- Stay overnight
- Designate a driver who will not be drinking
- Don’t be tempted to get into a car with a driver who has been drinking

SAFE AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Winter is upon us and it’s time for the Transport Recovery Team to put on its boots and pull pick-ups out of the mud. (Two from Sector 2 already!). Here are a few useful tips to help everyone remain safely on the road rather than off.

SAFELY FIRST WHEN DRIVING THIS WINTER

Tip No. 1
If you can’t walk in it, chances are you cannot drive in it. Stay clear of thick mud and you will be less likely to get stuck in it.

Tip No. 2
There are limitations as to what UNFICYP Chevy pick-ups are built to handle.
- Our pick-ups are not 4-ton trucks and will not withstand heavy loads like one.
- Our trucks are not built like Land Rovers and we cannot drive where Land Rovers are able to.
- Our pick-ups are not 4-ton trucks and will not withstand heavy loads like one.

Tip No. 3
Our Chevy trucks are not designed to tow vehicles (like a recovery truck is). That is for the transport unit to take care of. Tying a piece of rope to the rear bumper of any of the pick-ups and trying to pull out a stranded vehicle could have one or more of the following unfortunate effects:
- Re-design the rear bumper.
- Remove the rear bumper.
- Get your vehicle stuck.
- Damage whatever part of the stranded vehicle you tied the rope to.
- A certain visit to the Transport Unit to fill out a Driver’s Damage Report.
- Seriously injure you if a heavy piece of metal snaps off and comes flying back toward you.

Tip No. 4
Use some kind of weight in the rear of pick-ups in wet conditions to enhance tyre grip and cornering capabilities of the truck. Sandbags or cut tyre inner tubes weighing about 100 kilos, will help to decrease breaking distances and make the ride in the pick-up more comfortable.

Snow in the mountains causes treacherous road conditions. Ensure your vehicle is prepared for the journey (pack snow-chains) and allow plenty of time. Adjust your driving to the road conditions.

The Transport Unit and the Master Driver will be issuing detailed driving instructions before the snow sets in. Meanwhile, please do not hesitate to contact the unit in the case of an Emergency of with any questions.

Transport Unit
22.61.4452
22.61.4451

Master Driver
22.61.4708
The Whirling Dervishes

Niiscoia's Rumi Institute held a week of festivities marking the anniversary of the death of the poet Jelaluddin Rumi, also known as Mevlana, the founder of Sufism. The fourth annual commemoration staged by the institute included lectures on the philosophy and history of the Mevleva, and his book "The Mevlevi", concerts, dance shows and exhibitions.

Known to the West as the "Whirling Dervishes", members of the Mevlevi Order (named for their founder Mevleva, also known as "Rumi") lived in what we might call cloisters or monasteries, which, to them, were the "Mevlevihane". The Mevlevi Order founded by Mevleva is made up of the Monastery of Mevleva. The first of these monasteries was named for the Mevleva and was considered to be the source of those to follow. Mevlana and was considered to be the first of these tekyes was named for the Mevlana.

The Whirling Dervishes are among the most enduring as well as the most exquisite ceremonies of spirituality.

The Whirling of dervishes is an act of love and a drama of faith. It possesses a highly structured form within which the gentle turns and steps become increasingly dynamic as individual dervishes strive to achieve a state of trance. The music that accompanies the whirling from beginning to end ranges from somber to rhapsodical: its effect is intended to be mesmerizing. Chanting of poetry, rhythmic rotation and incessant music create a synthesis which, according to the Sufis, induces a feeling of exaltation of faith and of mystical flight. Chanting of poetry, rhythmic rotation and incessant music create a synthesis which, according to the Sufis, induces a feeling of exaltation of faith and of mystical flight.

The Sema ceremony represents a spiritual journey; the seeker’s turning toward God and truth, a maturing through love, the transformation of self as a way of union with God, and the return to life as the servant of all creation.

The Sema (with a camel-feet representing a tombstone and a wide white skirt symbolizing the death shroud), upon removing his black cloak, is spiritually born to the Truth. At first, semazens stand with their arms crossed, ready to begin their turning. In their erect posture, they represent the number one, testifying to God's unity. Each rotation takes them past the sheikh, who stands on a red sheep skin. This is the place of Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi, and the sheikh is understood to be a channel for divine grace. At the start of each of the four movements of the ceremony, the semazens bow to each other honoring the spirit within. As their arms unfold, the right hand opens to the skies in prayer, ready to receive God’s beneficence. The left hand, upon which his gaze rests, is turned towards the earth in a gesture of penitence a hundred times, Ours is the portal of hope, come as you are. Come, come again, whoever you are, come!

The Ritual of Sema

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THE WHIRLING DERVISHE

“Come, come again, whoever you are, come! Heathen, fire worshipper or idolatrous, come! Come even if you broke your idolatrous, come! Heathen, fire worshipper or idolatrous, come! Come even if you broke your idolatrous, come! Heathen, fire worshipper or idolatrous, come! Come even if you broke your idolatrous, come! Heathen, fire worshipper or idolatrous, come! Come even if you broke your idolatrous, come! Heathen, fire worshipper or idolatrous, come!”
st Barbara’s Day  The Patron Saint of The Royal Artillery

On St Barbara’s day, 4 December, 12 Regiment Royal Artillery held a charity run in aid of children in the north and south and also to help the kindergarten in the base location. The first runners arrived at 0700 in the Ledra Palace Hotel car park to start the 11-mile route through the Sector 2 West area of the buffer zone. The runners were sent out with the temperature a cool 14 degrees centigrade. The RSM managed to be first home in 1 hr. 28 min, setting an early target for those who followed.

To keep the operational tempo going as normal as possible, soldiers from 12 Regiment RA, MFR, and guests from UNFICYP trickled through the start all day long. At 0800 the competitive race got underway with the more athletic runners registering to compete. It was soon apparent that soldiers from 12 Regiment, even though on peacekeeping duties, still had a competitive edge. The fastest time recorded was 1 hr. and 17 min. All runners who completed the run also received a T-shirt donated by Atlantis Travel in Nicosia. Prize giving was held in the Ledra Palace ballroom at 1700, little more than an hour after the last of the runners finished the course. “Danny the Jeweller” from the northern side of Nicosia old town, generously donated and awarded the first, second and third prizes. The race was won by LDr. Welford. Second was LCpl. Burgess and third was CPL. Kettle.

Thanks go to WO2 (TSM) Wright and his team for the hard work they put in to ensure that the day ran smoothly. Also, a special thanks to all who participated. They showed a positive and enthusiastic attitude both in running and in helping raise over CP£1,000 for the charity fund.

According to legend, Saint Barbara was the extremely beautiful daughter of a wealthy heathen named Dissocius. Receiving such singular beauty and fear that she be demanded in marriage and taken away from him, he cruelly shut her up in a tower to protect her from the outside world. Whilst confined to the tower Barbara became the patroness of the artillerymen.

The Blue Beret

Almost every day, one (or more) members of the 37 engineers in the HQ Engineering Platoon can be seen, actively engaged in upgrading conditions within the buffer zone. In the last two months, the new kitchen block in Sector 1’s Roca Camp has been completed and additional telephone poles erected in Sector 4’s Camp St Ivan, Athienou. In all sectors, the ongoing repair and maintenance of patrol tracks continue, spurred on by the early winter rains, which often create hazardous conditions, particularly in the mountainous areas.

The UNPA work includes a new container, temporarily erected to house Operations Branch during the refurbishment of their old building. Paths have been constructed to and from accommodation quarters in Blue Beret Camp, and new patrol tracks and fencing have been installed around the UNPA as part of the on-going security programme.

Even though all HQ military engineers rotated recently, the commitments taken on by their Unit must be put into effect smoothly and efficiently. During this period the very popular Force Engineer Maj. ManajMrtjan departed, and was replaced by Maj. Karol Kubica.

Engineering Effort

Introducing the Force Engineer

The new Force Engineer, Maj. Karol Kubica, completed the Military Academy at Brno as a construction engineer in 1989 and immediately took over as platoon leader of a construction battalion. He served for four years in the Slovak Armed Force’s Chief of General Staff’s department, after which he took up the post of chief of the Support Regiment’s construction branch of the General Staff in Trenzin. He then became chief of the Construction Branch of HQ Land Forces, Slovak Armed Forces, Trenzin.
Maj. Kubica is married to Klaudia. They have two sons, Jakub (11) and Filip (10), and a daughter Karolina (6). His hobbies include swimming, tennis and gardening, but most of all his family.

El Salvador Joins UNPOL

Six November 2005 will always be remembered in the Civil National Police of El Salvador, as it marked the arrival of its first eight-member contingent in UNFICYP. Founded in 1993, the El Salvadorian Police Force counts almost 20,000 members and is held in very high regard in the Central American region.

The new UNPOL members are:

Agent Luis Jimenez from the disciplinary investigations department at police headquarters in the capital city, San Salvador.
Agent Francisco Perez and Agent Raul Ponce from the emergency communications room in police headquarters, San Salvador.
Agent Hugo Quevedo a member of the staff team at the INTERPOL office in El Salvador.
Agent Mario Diaz from the Salvadoran Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team. (Also trained in mountain and urban rescue.)
Agent Rafael Centeno a qualified English teacher and a member of the training Department at Police Headquarters.
Deputy Inspector Raúl Arana an expert computer engineer, is also an expert in criminal investigations, working closely with the FBI.
Deputy Inspector Nelson Cañas a trained medical doctor, he is the Contingent Commander here in UNFICYP and back in El Salvador heads a major policing unit.

UNPOL Force Level Reached

With the flag-raising ceremony of El Salvador on 20 December, the number of UNFICYP UNPOL Contingents reached a total of nine. Australia and Ireland, the “traditional” UNFICYP Contingents, have been joined now by India, Italy, The Netherlands, Croatia, Bosnia, Argentina and El Salvador. Under the current Security Council mandate, the approved strength is 70, an increase from an initial 42 to 70 in the year.

The new Force Engineer, Maj. Karol Kubica, completed the Military Academy at Brno as a construction engineer in 1989 and immediately took over as platoon leader of a construction battalion. He served for four years in the Slovak Armed Force’s Chief of General Staff’s department, after which he took up the post of chief of the Support Regiment’s construction branch of the General Staff in Trenzin. He then became chief of the Construction Branch of HQ Land Forces, Slovak Armed Forces, Trenzin.
Maj. Kubica is married to Klaudia. They have two sons, Jakub (11) and Filip (10), and a daughter Karolina (6). His hobbies include swimming, tennis and gardening, but most of all his family.

The new UNPOL members of UNPOL stood proudly to attention at the flag-raising ceremony and event was attended by Chief of Mission Zbigniew Wlosowicz, Force Commander Maj.Gen. Hebert Fipol, Senior Police Adviser Commander Carla Van Maris, Deputy Senior Police Adviser Commander Col Speedie, and members of UNPOL. Special guests included H.E. Dr. Roberto Andino, the Salvadorian Ambassador to Rome, and Mr. Mario Polivio, the Salvadorian Honorary Consul in Cyprus.

Following the flag-raising ceremony, a small reception was held for the guests.