

BLUE BERET

UNFICYP Magazine

November/December 2013

Anniversary Special

Argentina's 20 years
with UNFICYP

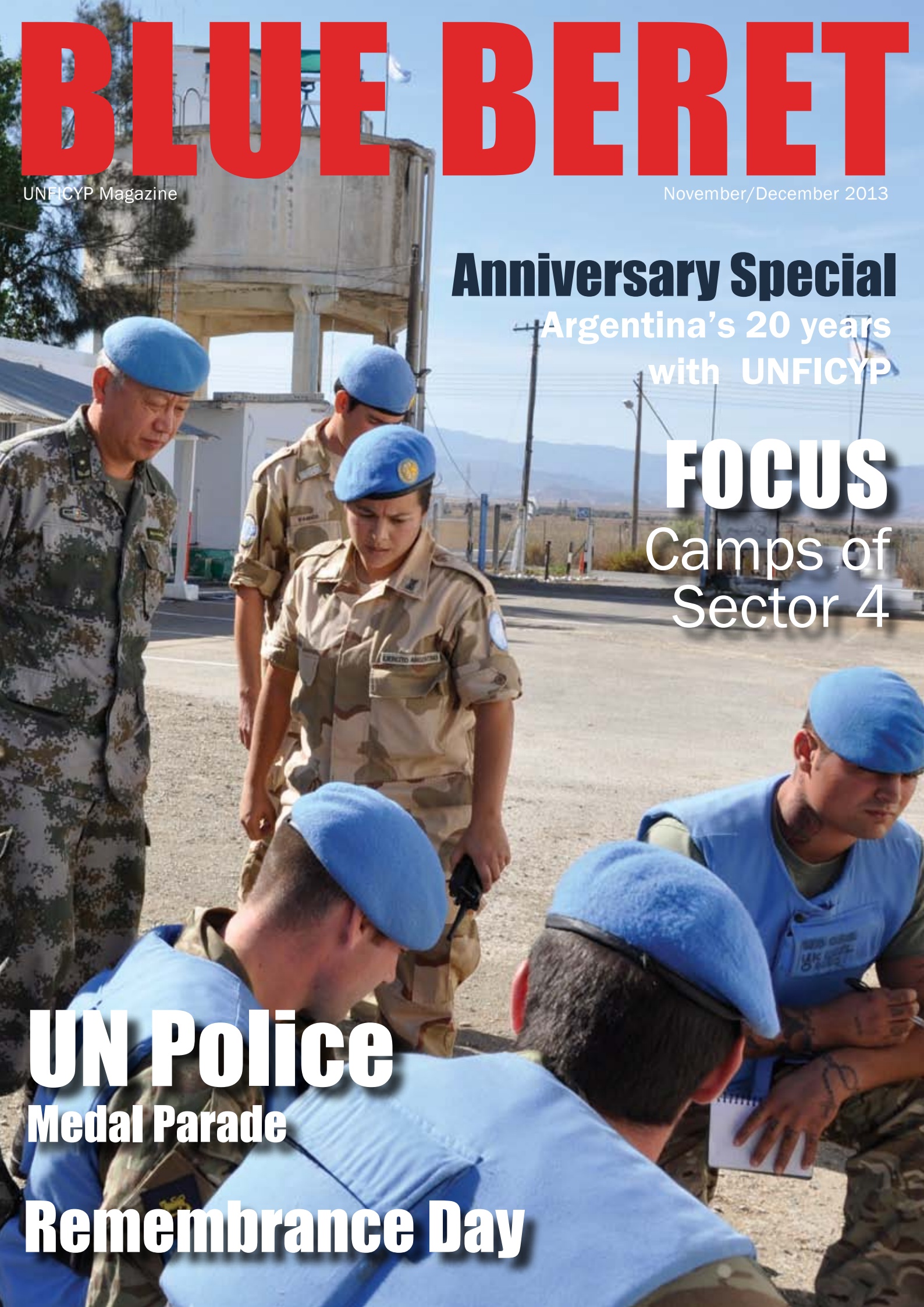
FOCUS

Camps of
Sector 4

UN Police

Medal Parade

Remembrance Day



BLUE BERET

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Front cover: The Force Commander makes his inspection of Sector 1.

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It is that time of year again, as we wind down for a brief seasonal respite before turning to tackle the next round of challenges and opportunities that a new year always brings.

Here at UNFICYP, planning is underway in earnest for a major milestone, with 4 March 2014 marking the 50th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 860 and the establishment of the Mission. Throughout 2014, the Public Information Office will be heavily involved in organizing events and communication materials around this occasion, a responsibility that will be keeping our team busy over the holiday period. As part of the suite of information products that will be produced for the anniversary, we will be bringing you a special series of the Blue Beret in 2014, devoted to the history and achievements of the Mission, and to spotlighting the role of the 31 countries that have contributed troops and police to UNFICYP over these 50 years.

In a foreshadowing of this fresh editorial line, the current issue of the Blue Beret covers anniversaries marked recently by two of our major troop contributing countries. Both Argentina and Hungary marked 20 years of peacekeeping on the island in 2013, their efforts an important part of the international will and commitment that have underwritten UNFICYP's functions over the decades - more to come next year as we bring you the story behind the contributions of each UNFICYP contingent, past and present.

Otherwise, after our successful focus on UNFICYP's Mission Support Component in the September/October issue, we return in this edition to our 'bread and butter' with an inclusive and comprehensive table of contents. We feature the UN Police, the Force Military Police, UN Flight, Sector 2's 28 Engineer Regiment, and a tour of the camps of Sector 4. We highlight the events that observed Remembrance Day this year, as well as UNFICYP's recent

charity contributions. We visit the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus to find out how they are supporting Iraq to deal with its own missing persons caseload, and cover the wonderful municipal evening that brought the two mayors of Nicosia together for the first time under the UN's auspices. In a nod to our diehard readers intent on seeing some action, we devote a two-page spread to the triumph of the military skills competition that saw Slovakia emerge victorious. Our cover shot is taken from the Force Commander's inspections, which kept all Sectors on their toes through November.

Indeed, it has been a busy two months, the volume and diversity of content generated for this issue proving that 49 years have not slowed us nor lessened our commitment here on the island. As many readers will know, the efforts to bring about a long-term, sustainable and mutually agreed comprehensive settlement in Cyprus are ongoing. Our Civil Affairs and UNDP colleagues have been very active this year in bringing together the two communities for religious, cultural and civil society events that point to a gathering grassroots momentum for a solution. Our colleagues in the UN Good Offices continue to work tirelessly to support the efforts of the negotiating teams to come up with a joint declaration establishing the basis for a new round of talks.

As we move into our 50th anniversary year, there is cautious optimism amongst UN and international commentators that this golden anniversary will provide us with more than the chance to look back and to thank our troop and police contributing countries for their commitment to peacekeeping in Cyprus. With the right combination of political will and constructive dialogue, 2014 may well be the chance to celebrate a beginning, and we look forward to what the new year has in store. In the meantime, all the very best from the Blue Beret team for a joyous holiday period. Happiness, health and season's greetings to all!



Remembrance Day

On Sunday, 10 November, UNFICYP's 'family of nations' came together to remember the 184 service and supporting personnel who have lost their lives whilst on duty in Cyprus, and to pay tribute to the fallen from the two great wars and more recent struggles of the last decades. Hosted by the British Contingent, the ceremony was held at Wayne's Keep Military Cemetery in the buffer zone in Nicosia, and attended by the international community, peacekeepers and civilian staff. Diplomats, veterans and friends stepped forward one by one to lay wreaths in memory of the fallen, and the padres of all three Sectors led the ceremony, the voices of many nations combined in reflection. The Pipe Major played beautifully, and the Fijian Choir added a special and solemn touch to the occasion.



November 11 at UNFICYP HQ

Remembrance Day is officially observed “at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month”, to recall the end of the hostilities of World War I. On Monday 11 November, a representative group of peacekeepers, led by Force Commander Major General Chao Liu, gathered at UNFICYP HQ for a small and dignified ceremony to observe the traditional Two Minutes Silence.



20th Anniversary of Argentine Peacekeeping in Cyprus

Argentina marked its 20 years of peacekeeping on the island during the Sector 1 medal parade. In attendance for the special occasion were Chief of Mission Lisa Buttenheim, Force Commander Major General Chao Liu, and visiting Brigadier General Ricardo Luis Cundom, Operational Commander of the Armed Forces of Argentina. After the medal parade, guests went on to a reception, enjoying the many Latin American dishes on offer as they were entertained by a wonderful display of tango dancing. Sector 1's current rotation is made up of 295 troops. Most are from Argentina, but the contingent also includes 14 peacekeepers from Chile and Paraguay respectively, and 1 Brazilian. To commemorate Argentina's 20-year presence in Cyprus, a new plaque now takes pride of place near the entrance of San Martin Camp.



Interview

Commanding Officer of Sector 1

LtCol Miguel Angel Salguero



As the Commanding Officer of Sector 1, at this significant moment for Argentina, LtCol Salguero is proud of his country's efforts in Cyprus, and in particular of the 295 troops he leads here. We sat down with him to find out more about Argentina's contribution over 20 years at UNFICYP.

How do these 20 years of Argentine peacekeeping in Cyprus fit in with Argentina's overall contributions to peacekeeping through the years?

Argentina's contribution here is part of our long-standing commitment to peacekeeping that dates back to 1958 when the first Argentinean military observers were deployed in Lebanon. In 1992, a new state policy advocating for an expanded role in UN peacekeeping led to the deployment of the first Argentinean infantry battalion to the former Yugoslavia. This was the starting point for sending full units abroad, and shortly afterwards, in 1993, Argentina committed 350 peacekeepers to Cyprus. Over the years, even with changes of Government at home, we have continued to support UN peacekeeping with contributions in Haiti, Western Sahara and the Golan Heights.

What is special about the Argentine peacekeeping forces? What particular skills do they bring to the job that make them stand out?

What we can provide to this mission, and indeed to any mission, is a very good personal level communication with people. Coming from Argentina, we are always welcomed when we travel. Almost everyone in the world has a friend or relative with some sort of link to Argentina and we are met with enthusiasm when we encounter new people overseas because of these connections. Being Latins, we return the enthusiasm that is sent our way by welcoming strangers. We like talking and socializing, and through this we develop a real empathy towards others that aids us in providing goodwill to those who have suffered through conflict.

What is special about this Contingent, the 42nd Argentinean Taskforce, that you command?

We were very well trained prior to coming here. The core unit of this rotation is my regiment that I command in Argentina, and I started in September 2012 to train them. I had one year. The army allows us this time to train troops for a peacekeeping operation, to drill them in the types of skills needed to operate, such as negotiating and communicating, as well as the finer points of driving on the left hand side of the road! All the troops felt very confident from the first day here. I also had a motto when I came with this rotation, that I used to motivate the troops. I told them, "This is the very best trained and very best taskforce that Argentina has brought to Cyprus. Do you know why? Because the next one will be better." This is something that really stands out about the Argentinean Contingent in Cyprus – we keep building on our skills and strengths with each rotation.

The empathy that you talk about, has it helped your mission here in Cyprus?

Definitely. Empathy is very useful, not only for dealing with our colleagues in the other Sectors, but also with the local population. We feel comfortable with all of these interlocutors, and we carry out this liaison work very professionally. Empathy also helps us to get across the language barrier, although of course we would all like to improve

our English skills while we are here in Cyprus. All our peacekeepers have qualified to a certain standard in English, but you can imagine that it is sometimes hard for us to practise at home when our closest English speaking neighbour is New Zealand!

After 20 years here, there must have been a great deal of interaction between Argentinean peacekeepers in Sector 1, and the local community. What impression do you think they have made there?

I believe that every country that sends peacekeepers to a mission is sending 200 and something ambassadors to another country. That is why we are concerned with doing things well and maintaining the good reputation that the Argentine Contingent has. If every peacekeeper understands that every task he or she accomplishes is helping to contribute to the big picture, that is a revelation for everyone.

What do you think Argentina's peacekeepers take away with them after a tour in Cyprus?

This is a mission that teaches a lot. I believe it is a very good starting point for the Argentine contingent to have their first experience of serving under the UN flag. Always, being abroad gives people the opportunity to enhance their professional skills, their level of English understanding and social experience, and their ability to deal with real life problems. On a personal level, many of the young NCOs and officers are getting the first stamps in their passports when they come here. It is a good chance for them to visit new countries, understand how different cultures behave and act, and learn a lot from others. For the troops, from a professional and personal perspective, it's a great experience. They are going to be better soldiers and better people when they return to Argentina.

In figures: Argentine Peacekeeping

295 Argentinean peacekeepers in Cyprus in this rotation (including UN Flight)

12,000 Argentinean peacekeepers deployed with UNFICYP over a twenty year period

2,000 Argentinean peacekeepers deployed with the UN globally each year

40,000 Argentinean peacekeepers deployed with the UN since 1958

2 Argentinean Force Commanders of UNFICYP since 1993

A tour of Sector 4

Sector 4 is well known as a multinational sector. Slovaks, Hungarians, Serbs, Croats and, since September 2013, Ukrainians serve there. The lead nation is Slovakia with its main camp and HQ situated in the historical town of Famagusta. The camp is named after the Slovak national hero General Milan Rastislav Štefánik. Serbian peacekeepers are stationed at Camp Nemanja in Pyla, while the Hungarians are based at St Stephen's Camp in Athienou.

The Slovak and Hungarian Contingents have been in the service of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus since 2001, when

they took over Sector 4 from the Austrian Contingent. In 2005, Sector 4 was strengthened by the addition of soldiers from Croatia, and more recently with soldiers from Serbia and Ukraine.

The five countries contribute 284 men and women to the Mission, the majority of whom work within Sector 4, in 3 platoons and MOLO teams. Others are based at the UNFICYP Headquarters and Contingent Headquarters. The Contingents also have personnel assigned to the Mobile Force Reserve, the Force Military Police Unit, and a separate troop of 37 Slovak Engineers who are located in the United Nations Protected Area.

Camp Štefánik



Under swaying gum trees in the heart of Famagusta, Camp Štefánik is the only UNFICYP Camp to be so centrally located in a major town.

Sector 4 HQ namesake Milan Rastislav Štefánik



Born on July 21, 1880 in Košariská, part of the Kingdom of Hungary, General Milan Rastislav Štefánik was a Slovak politician, diplomat, and astronomer. During World War I, he served as a General in the French Army and, at the same time, as the Czechoslovak Minister of War. As one of the leading members of the Czechoslovak National Council, he contributed decisively to the cause of Czechoslovak sovereignty, and its emergence from the shadows of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Štefánik's personal motto was
To Believe, To Love and To Work

Camp Nemanja



On the cliff overlooking the bi-communal village of Pyla, Camp Nemanja is the base for the Serbian peacekeepers of Sector 4. The Camp was previously known to Slovaks as Alcatraz, but was renamed in honour of Stefan Nemanja.

Who was Stefan Nemanja?

Stefan Nemanja (1113-13 February 1199) was the Grand Prince of the Serbian Grand Principality from 1166 to 1196.

He is remembered for his contributions to Serbian culture and history, being the founder of the powerful Serbian state that would evolve into the Serbian Empire, and the national church. He was the father of Stefan Nemanjić, the first King of Serbia, and of Saint Sava, the first archbishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

In 1196, he abdicated in favour of his son Stefan, and went to Mount Athos, where he became a monk and took the name of Simeon. Together with his son Sava, Simeon built the Hilandar Monastery from 1198-1199 which later became the cradle of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

After his death, Stefan Nemanja was canonized under the name Saint Simeon the Myrrh-streaming. He is regarded as the most remarkable Serb for his literary contributions and altruistic attributes.

Camp St. Istvan

Introducing St. Stephen

Stephen I, also Saint Stephen, (Hungarian: I. Szent István) was the last Grand Prince of the Hungarians between 997 and 1000, and the first King of Hungary. Already raised a Christian, in 996 he wed the daughter of Duke Henry II of Bavaria and devoted his reign to the promotion of the Christian faith.

After succeeding his father in 997, Stephen had to fight for the throne against his relative, Koppány, who was supported by masses of pagan warriors. In a series of wars against semi-independent tribes and chieftains he unified the Carpathian Basin, and crushed the pagan counterreaction to Christianity.

In recognition of his efforts, Stephen was anointed king of

Hungary in 1000, receiving the cross and crown from Pope Sylvester II. He protected the independence of his kingdom by forcing the invading troops of Conrad II, Holy Roman Emperor to withdraw from Hungary in 1030.

St. Stephen died on 15 August 1038 and was buried in his new basilica, built in Székesfehérvár. His crown and regalia became beloved symbols of the Hungarian nation, and Stephen was venerated as the ideal Christian king. Canonized in 1083 by Pope St. Gregory VII, he became the patron saint of Hungary where his feast day on 20 August is also a public holiday commemorating the foundation of the state.

This Sector 4 Camp is located in the village of Athienou and is the responsibility of the Hungarian platoon. It is named after St. Stephen, known as St. Istvan in Hungarian.



20 years of HUNCON at UNFICYP

By Maj. László Garaczi and 1st Lt. Beáta Kis

In 2013, anniversaries were not only confined to Sector 1. Over in Sector 4, Hungary also marked its 20 years with UNFICYP. Its contribution here is the longest running of Hungary's global peacekeeping efforts.

In the early years of Hungary's involvement with international peacekeeping, the Hungarian Defence Forces sent small groups of Military Observers under UN mandates to crisis centres in Africa (Angola, Uganda and Mozambique) and to the Middle East (Iraq and Kuwait). The contribution to UNFICYP began in August 1993 with a group of four Military Observers.

The first full-fledged Hungarian UN peacekeeping unit started its role in Cyprus in 1997 as part of the Austrian-Hungarian-Slovenian peacekeeping battalion, with HUNCON providing a company of 105 troops. From this time, the soldiers from the Hungarian Defence Forces served in Sector 4, where the lead nation at that time was Austria. Besides the patrolling tasks, they contributed troops to the MFR and FMPU. Officers and NCOs covered various positions at Sector 4 HQ in Famagusta, with 7 staff officers at UNFICYP HQ in Nicosia. The Hungarian soldiers in Sector 4 were accommodated in "Camp Berger" (Louroujina) and in Athienou, with their tasks and duties centred on those areas. The Company and Platoon HQs had

direct contact with lower level OPFOR and their commanders, where they discussed OPFOR violations/incidents along the Buffer Zone.

In 2001 the Austrian Contingent handed over the lead position of Sector 4 to the Slovak Contingent, but the Hungarian Contingent remained the second-largest national contingent in the Sector. This is still the case. In 2004, when the profile of the Mission changed, the Hungarian contribution became a single platoon, based solely in Athienou and PB 91 in the buffer zone. Also in 2005, new Military Observer and Liaison Officers (MOLO) positions were established. The Hungarian Contingent covers a significant contribution to these positions, with 4 MOLO officers. Significantly, HUNCON also occupies the Sector 4 senior MOLO position.

In the past 20 years more than 3300 Hungarian soldiers have served as peacekeepers with UNFICYP. They have garnered a well-deserved international appreciation for Hungary, the Hungarian Defence Forces and of course for themselves. Many of them have returned several times to the island of Cyprus, motivated to take on another mission by their belief that they could be useful members of the multinational and multidimensional UNFICYP.

Currently 77 Hungarian troops are deployed with UNFICYP under the command of LtCol Marton Szasz.

Profile of the 28 Engineer Regiment

By Lt David George, 28 Regiment Media Officer

In October 2013, 28 Engineer Regiment became the first Engineer Regiment to deploy to Cyprus on Op TOSCA. They took over from 17 Port and Maritime Regiment (17 P&M), Royal Logistics Corps, the previous incumbents of Sector 2. Though not the first Royal Engineer soldiers to deploy to the Sector, they are the first Royal Engineer Regimental Headquarters to cover a commitment that has previously always been fulfilled by British units from the Royal Artillery, Infantry or Royal Logistics Corps.

Preparation for deployment

28 Engineer Regiment began preparing in earnest for deployment to Cyprus in July 2013. The Regiment began with situational briefings at their home base in Hameln, Germany. These briefings included the history of Cyprus, the current situation in the buffer zone and information about their specific roles within UNFICYP. They also received information on life in Cyprus from the reconnaissance party that had visited the island a few weeks previously. In September the Regiment moved to Nesscliffe Camp, Shropshire, UK, to conduct practical pre-deployment lessons and exercises. They practiced patrolling the buffer zone and dealing with potential problems, including over-manning of checkpoints, fires in the buffer zone and deployment of UNPOL & the MFR. The Regiment also received training in self-defence, communications, driving and first aid.

Arrival

28 Engineer Regiment arrived at Ledra Palace Hotel in late September and officially took over from 17 P&M on 1st October 2013. With only a few days for each individual handover/takeover, all members

of the Regiment were forced to learn quickly. They were taken around all their Areas of Responsibility (AOR) including all areas of the buffer zone within Sector 2, the United Nations Protected Area (UNPA) and the city of Nicosia. The Regiment, already formed into its operational structure, was quickly immersed in the daily life of its Area of Operation (AO).

Structure

The Regiment is formed into an Operations Squadron, which covers the patrolling of the buffer zone, and a Support Squadron which provides all the logistical, training, operational and personnel support to the Operations Squadron. 28 Engineer Regiment is supplemented by infantry soldiers from 3rd Battalion, Princess of Wales Royal Regiment (3 PWRR). These soldiers, based at UNPA, provide a constant reserve, ready to deploy at short notice, whilst also conducting patrols around UNPA.

Force Commander's Inspection

The Regiment was inspected by the Commander of the UNFICYP mission, Major General Chao Liu and his Chief of Staff Colonel Angus Loudon on 12th November 2013. The aim of the inspection was to ensure the Regiment was conducting its role correctly, meeting the mission requirements and it also gave the Force Commander a chance to meet the officers and soldiers of 28 Engineer Regiment.

28 Engineer Regiment will be conducting the UNFICYP mission in Sector 2 until 1st April 2014, when they will be relieved by Infantry soldiers from the 1st Battalion Irish Guards.



Handover-Takeover: Commanding Officer of 28 Engineer Group, Lt Col Chas Story, right, takes the reins from outgoing Sector 2 Commander Lt Col Rob Askew.



'Uniformity' at the FMPU

By SSgt Wilson, CJ Pl Comd

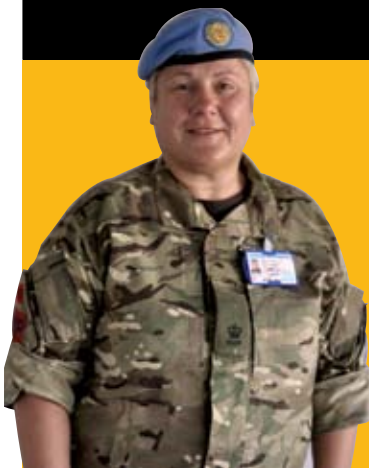
UNFICYP's Force Military Police Unit (FMPU) is a multinational team comprising personnel from Britain, Hungary, Slovakia and Argentina. Though they are a close-knit operational unit, a certain 'disharmony' in their dresscode had started to bother new New Force Provost Marshall, Karen Miller.

In fact, in most UN missions, Military Police are identified through a badge worn on the sleeve of serving personnel, a military armband better known as a 'brassard'. Here at UNFICYP, the FMPU has not sported a brassard in recent years, although photo evidence shows that this was not always the case. It is not known when or why the practice stopped at UNFICYP, but the

Force Provost Marshall set about ensuring that the FMPU team was united again with a common 'look'.

A new brassard was created by the command element of FMPU and manufactured through a local source. The Force Commander gave his authority on 7 October 2013 for members of FMPU to wear the new brassard, with FMPU personnel given permission to retain their brassards at the end of their tours, as a keepsake of their tour.

The new design emphasises the status of FMPU personnel and makes them more visible to other members of the Mission, ensuring uniformity and adding that extra dash of panache to their already-solid team cohesion.



A word with UNFICYP's Force Provost Marshal

Major Karen Miller is the current Force Provost Marshal, overseeing a team of 23 military police. The Force Provost Marshal is responsible for policing the force, personnel and

property of UNFICYP, anywhere on the island.

"The biggest job for us is of course crime reduction, to detect and deter," explains Major Miller. "The biggest deterrence efforts come in the form of high profile traffic policing. Statistically, we have a low level of traffic incidents at UNFICYP. This is a direct result of the number of level of controls that we carry out."

Aside from regulating traffic on the United Nations Protected Area (UNPA) and all UNFICYP traffic island-wide, Major Miller is responsible for investigating incidents involving UNFICYP personnel or property, and collecting any forensic evidence to support an investigation.

"I am also a UN staff officer so I can be asked by the regional Conduct and Discipline Team to be part of a panel to conduct an enquiry. I have also just been appointed to the UNFICYP Working Group on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse."

What is a Provost Marshal?

Nowadays, the Provost Marshal is the officer in the armed forces in charge of the military police. The title has its origins in the times of the Norman invaders, around 1066AD, where the title-holder was responsible for enforcing military discipline and maintaining peace between the various armies that made up the invading forces. Traditionally, the King personally appointed the Provost Marshal to ensure his undoubted allegiance to the Crown. Although primarily a military officer, the Provost Marshal was also in charge of maintaining the peace "12 miles about the Prince's person". In 1629, the Articles of War of Charles I of England contained the following description of the Provost's duties: *"The Provost must have a horse allowed him and some soldiers to attend him and all the rest commanded to obey and assist or else the Service will suffer, for he is but one man and must correct many and therefore he cannot be beloved. And he must be riding from one garrison to another to see the soldiers do not outrage nor scathe the country."*

First-time deployment of Slovak Police to UN peacekeeping

Recently arrived at UNFICYP, Major Jana Jahodnikova and Major Rastislav Caja from the Slovak Republic have the honour of being the first Slovak civilian police officers ever to be deployed to a United Nations peacekeeping mission. The Slovak Police Force was created on 1 January 1993 when Slovakia became an independent republic, and is overseen by the Ministry of Interior. Although the inclusion of two Slovak officers in UNFICYP's Police contingent is a significant first, the Slovak Republic's Police Force has actively participated in international missions with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union, in diverse locations, from Kazakhstan to Afghanistan, Moldova, Palestine and Kosovo.

Major Rastislav Caja

Rastislav joined UNFICYP in March 2013 as a Pyla SCAT officer in Sector 4, and in May was appointed as Deputy Police Sector Commander in Famagusta CGS. He has been on mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Georgia, and back in Slovakia was working at the Department of International Police Cooperation of the Police Presidium. He is a certified International Trainer for Police missions and has regularly lectured in Sweden, Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary and Serbia. Rastislav is married to Alenka who is also an active police officer, and they have two little sons, Marek and Andrej. Rastislav's favorite pastimes are travelling, flute playing, gardening and floriculture



Major Jana Jahodnikova

Jana joined UNFICYP in March 2013 as a patrol officer at Linou Police Station in Sector 1, before transferring to Dherynia Police Station in Sector 4 in August. She served with the European Union mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2008 to 2010, and back in the Slovak Republic worked in the Anti-Organized Crime Department investigating human trafficking. Jana holds a law degree and is married with a 19 month old daughter. Jana's favorite activities include playing volleyball and basketball, swimming, travelling and cooking. She also enjoys meeting new people and getting acquainted with new cultures.



UNFICYP's Policewomen

"I greatly appreciate that UNFICYP is a family-friendly mission that encourages women to become part of the peacekeeping family. Here we can have work and family, side-by-side, which helps to reduce homesickness and makes the mission feel like home." - Major Jana Jahodnikova

22% of UNFICYP's Police component are women, a proportion that places UNFICYP higher than the average 10% policewomen across all UN peacekeeping operations.

Increasing the proportion of women in peacekeeping: The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) continues to respond to the call in all Women, Peace and Security mandates to increase the numbers of women in peacekeeping by advocating with all troop and police-contributing countries for the deployment of more women.

UN Police Medal Parade

On 28 November, 31 members of UNFICYP’s Police Component received United Nations Medals for their service with the mission during a special ceremony at the UN Police Club. During the event, Force Commander Major General Chao Liu awarded medals to UN Police from Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, India, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania and Serbia. In a special appearance, the Cyprus Police Band, conducted by Inspector George Adamou, honoured the event by playing the national anthems of the countries of medal recipients.



Commander Colin Speedie, Senior Police Adviser and Head of the Police Component, addresses the ceremony

UNFICYP’s Police Component

The Police Component is currently made up of 65 members from 11 different contingents – a truly multinational police force. The authorized figure is 69 police officers contributed by the following countries:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Bosnia and Herzegovina: 8 | Lithuania: 2 |
| Croatia: 4 | Montenegro: 4 |
| India: 8 | Serbia: 2 |
| Ireland: 12 | Slovakia: 2 |
| Italy: 4 | Ukraine: 8 |



Operating at night, a pilot's delight

Some tips from the UN Flight team

UNFICYP's Night Flight capabilities are increasing all the time, with a capacity to carry out MEDEVAC/CASEVAC in the Bell 212, and to operate night flights in various locations across the Sectors. Here the UN Flight team shares some of its experience in night flight preparedness.

Every aspect of flying at night is different from the clear light of day. The helicopter is more difficult to inspect. The cockpit takes on an air of unfamiliarity as it fades in the dim red glow of the panel lights. Weather becomes more important, as does flight planning and the attention required from the pilots in the cockpit.

Your best defense, the best strategy, is to combine skill and judgement with an in-depth knowledge of night flying. Each step in the process of a night flight requires special knowledge and close attention to minor details.

Captain Vargas, Air Operations Officer, UN Flight

The first rule for a night preflight inspection is to do it during the day whenever possible. Problems are more difficult to spot at night, and a flashlight cannot replace the illumination of the sun. This does not mean you can bypass a final check before departure, but a daylight preflight will give you added peace of mind.

It can take 30 minutes or more for a pilot's eyes to adapt to low light, but 20 minutes in dim red cockpit lighting will provide a moderate degree of adaptation. Once your eyes have adapted, if you look at white lights, the adaptation process must start again.

An important night flight medical consideration concerns your biological clock, or circadian rhythm. Regardless of other factors, circadian rhythms tell us to sleep when the sun goes down. They slow your mental functions, which means you tend to be more complacent, not the ideal condition to be in while piloting a helicopter. Flying with a passenger or another pilot can help keep your brain engaged.

Training is an important part of night flight preparedness and provides the tools necessary to achieve the task safely and efficiently.



Inside out

The Bell 212 undergoes its regular inspection

By 1st Lt Pablo F. Buira

UNFICYP's Bell helicopter has just undergone its Major Inspection Cycle (ICM), a standard procedure performed every 3,000 flight hours that literally turns the Bell 212 inside out as each and every part is carefully examined.

This painstaking work was carried out by a registered technician from the Bell Textron Company, in collaboration with UN Flight technicians. The process involves a close examination of each part of the helicopter, down to the tiniest component, requiring a full disassemble of the entire structure. A large crane in the Bell Hangar at UNPA with a lifting capacity of 3 tonnes was on hand to help with the disassembly, and testing of the parts was conducted using specialized non-invasive tools such as borescope, x-ray, ultrasound and tracking equipment.

Upon completion of the inspection of parts, the helicopter was reassembled for a test flight, before being fully cleared for operation.



Slovaks overpower all rivals to win the Military Skills Competition

By Capt Tomas Ciampor, Military Public Information Officer

The biannual Military Skills Competition was held on Wednesday 20th of November 2013 at the UNPA in Nicosia. Competitors from all sectors and sections of UNFICYP were ready to fight hard to be the new champion. Soldiers from all sectors trained hard for weeks before the actual competition – knowing that beating ruling champions from the MFR and completing the difficult course would be a huge challenge.

They left nothing to chance in their preparation for the event and with each approaching day they trained even harder. There were 8 competing teams in total, each sector put on 2 teams and one team each from MFR and HQ (after 11 years AUSCON took part and volunteered 50 percent of their contingent to represent HQ resulting in the participation of 2 AUSCON members).

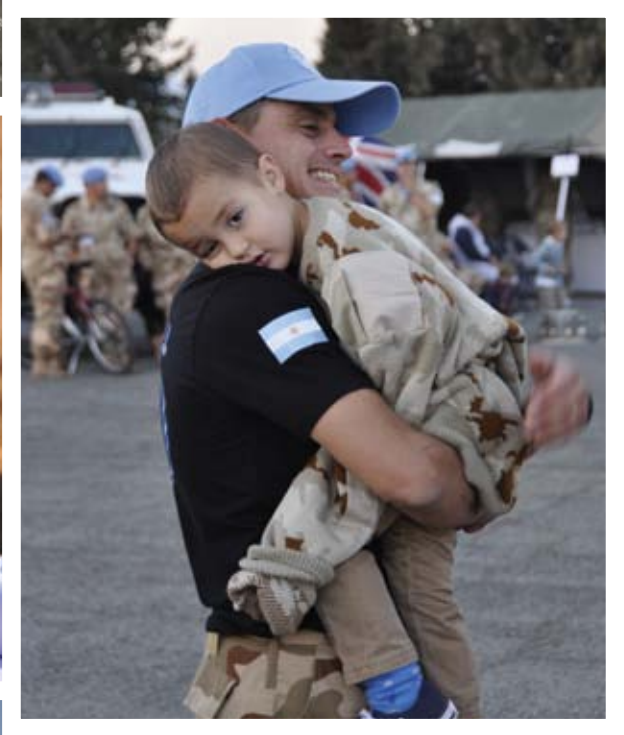
At 0600 hrs the competition started with the “Endurance Run”. Following this first test of physical strength and fitness greeted by shouts and cheers from onlookers, all participating teams started their own assignments meant to test not only their physical strength and readiness but also their military knowledge, skills

and team spirit. The teams were subjected to challenging situations on a very muddy driving range, command tasks with blindfolds, incident reaction, map reading, shooting, patrolling and observation during which they tried to score as many points as possible to get ahead of the competition. Each and every competitor wanted to be the one to be remembered, if only until the next competition.

After almost 10 hours of gruelling competition, team points were tallied and the winners announced. The anticipated battle for first place between perennial rivals MFR and Sector 2 took place as planned. However, results showed the emergence of new champions: the A-team from Sector 4. The MFR came in a close second with an equal number of points but slightly behind on the Assault course whilst the A-team of Sector 1 clinched the third spot.

In his speech, Force Commander Major General Chao Liu lauded the occasion as “challenging, and costing a lot of effort from all who participated, including those who prepared and organized the MSC event,” and finally thanked the supporters for their cheers and esprit de corps.





CMP welcomes Iraqi scientists in learning exchange

The year 2013 was the most important yet for the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP) in Cyprus, which worked to identify 140 missing persons over 12 months, a record number that has helped to end decades of uncertainty for the families of these victims. As the CMP's activities continue to gain momentum, it is reaching out to other countries grappling with the legacy of missing persons, and expanding its role as a source of learning.

Dr. Yasameen Mundher Sedeeq and Ms. Riyam Ahmed Ali are from the Medico-Legal Institute (MLI) in Baghdad. In November, they spent two weeks at the CMP Anthropological Laboratory, working in close collaboration with the bi-communal forensic team of more than 60 Cypriot archeologists, anthropologists and geneticists.

“The experience here in Cyprus has been excellent,” says Yasameen, a dentist and Deputy Head of the Mass Graves Department at MLI, of her time at the CMP. “It has been very useful to exchange information and to learn from colleagues here, and it will be so helpful to us to take this new knowledge back to Iraq.”

Decades of conflict have left Iraq to deal with a vast missing persons file; the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) estimates that Iraq has between 250,000 and 1 million missing persons, more than any other country in the world. “Actually, in Iraq, there are many people with missing relatives who do not even know that it is possible to search for them. They do not know how to find out about the missing,” says Riyam, a Medical Technician at MLI.

“It is very sad, but we are working hard to bring hope,” adds Yasameen. “We are about to embark on a large campaign to take blood samples from people living in the areas where we have found mass graves, so that we can begin to try to match the remains with their relatives.” Some of the mass graves found around the Iraqi countryside contain more remains than the entire registry of 2,001 missing persons in Cyprus. As part of its efforts to assist the Government of Iraq in addressing the issue of large-scale disappearances, the ICMP provides training to MLI staff at its headquarters in Sarajevo, and

coordinates learning visits like this one in Cyprus. “The support of international organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the ICMP is very important for us in our work,” confirms Yasameen.

It is significant that Cyprus, after commencing excavations just seven years ago, is now also in a position to support countries like Iraq. “This is the fourth visit this year by Iraqi scientists and senior civil servants to our Lab,” says Paul-Henri Arni, the United Nations Third Member of the CMP in Nicosia. “We are glad that we can assist in building up know-how to help Iraq deal with the world’s largest missing persons caseload.”

The CMP team echoes this enthusiasm for supporting colleagues from countries like Iraq. İstenc Engin and Theodora Eleftheriou are Coordinators at the CMP Lab and worked closely with Yasameen and Riyam during the two weeks they spent in Cyprus.

“When I first started working at the CMP, experts from elsewhere were coming here to train us,” says İstenc. “It is a very good feeling to know that we can now host colleagues from other countries, and share our knowledge to help them with their own missing persons caseloads.”

“This is just the beginning,” adds Theodora. “We are also hoping to go to Baghdad to visit the MLI, so that this partnership continues into the future.”

The partnership is already strong, with the experience of working in such a sensitive field drawing these forensic experts together. “Although we are from different countries, we share an immediate bond,” says İstenc. “What is common for us is the pain that we see among families of victims, and the small relief that we are able to bring through our work. We know what this is like, whether we work in Cyprus, Iraq, or another country, and as colleagues and professionals, this helps to bring us close together very quickly.”

Yasameen and Riyam nod in agreement, adding, “We look forward to returning to Iraq to continue our work, armed with our new knowledge, and we hope to welcome our new CMP friends in Baghdad very soon.”

For more information on the CMP: www.cmp-cyprus.org



Yasameen and Riyam, front row, second and third from left, with some of their CMP colleagues. İstenc is in the first row, second from right, and Theodora in the second row, third from left.



UN hosts first gathering of Nicosia Mayors and councillors

UNFICYP and the Secretary General's Good Offices mission in Cyprus brought the Nicosia mayors of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and their respective council members together for an informal barbeque at the Ledra Palace Hotel on November 1st.

The friendly gathering was intended as a meet-and-greet for municipal workers from both Nicosia municipalities and an occasion to discuss issues of common interest. "Creating a space where the municipalities from both sides can come together to air and resolve issues is really at the heart of what UNFICYP does," said Civil Affairs Chief Faylene Woolley. "It is a crucial step towards developing a common vision for the future of the capital."

Speaking at the event, Nicosia Mayor Constantinos Yiorkadjis said: "The everyday needs of citizens and the practical problems faced by the city indicate the need for cooperation between the two communities. In order to have a fruitful and productive cooperation, one needs to communicate and understand each other". For his part, Kadri Fellahoğlu Mayor of the Nicosia Turkish Municipality said that: "Even though we, the two Mayors, do not have a direct role in the negotiations, by cooperating with each other and by organizing events of this kind, I believe that we can get the momentum going in a very positive way".



Mayor Fellahoglu, left, and Mayor Yiorkadjis



Civil Affairs Chief Faylene Woolley



Munehiko Harada of Civil Affairs with Slovak Ambassador Oksana Tomova

World AIDS Day marked at UNFICYP

World AIDS day was marked at UNFICYP with a variety of activities including the handing out of t-shirts, caps and leaflets to all personnel as they entered the Blue Beret Camp on 6 December.

Personnel were able to drop their loose change in donation boxes as they passed through the entrance of the Camp. All the proceeds will be given to the associations supporting people living with HIV and AIDS in the two communities.

UNFICYP personnel who recently completed the Peer Education Training also organized events in the Sectors to mark the day.

A 10km marathon took place in the UNPA. An additional short 1.5km course was also held for those unable to take part in the marathon. On completion of the course, participants and staff were also asked to observe a one minute silence and light a candle in remembrance of those who have died over the last 30 years.





Biking for Charity

What do you usually do at the weekend? Sleep, go out for a drink or a meal with friends.... maybe read a good book, or perhaps go to the cinema???

Not in this case. On the first Advent weekend, 30th November – 1st December 2013, UNFICYP Chief of Staff, Colonel Angus Loudon and two of his friends from BFC (British Forces Cyprus) showed courage, stamina, strong will and determination for a noble purpose, raising money for two cancer charities - Marie Curie Cancer Care, and Maggie's Cancer Care Centre - who between them provide medical care and support, both to cancer sufferers and their families. Colonel Loudon's family benefitted hugely from their support during his late wife's illness.

The challenge for the team was nothing less than to cycle the entire length of the Buffer Zone.

Their journey commenced at OP8 in Sector 1 in the early morning hours of Saturday 30th, and followed the 180km of the Patrol Track through to OP146 in Sector 4, on the east coast north of Dherynia. Angus and his team planned to fulfill this mission in two days. This adventure took in the mountainous terrain of Sector 1, the urban areas of Sector 2, and the plains of Sector 4, all on the rough surface of the patrol track, so it presented unique and demanding challenges throughout its length. The task was made harder by a strong wind

coming from an unusual easterly direction, directly into their faces. But, at least it was dry throughout.

On their journey, they were superbly supported in all respects by members of the Sectors through which they passed, with rations, water and moral support, and even with Sector Commanders and members of the UNPOL staff cycling along with them. Despite the hard stony surface there was just one puncture, so the time loss was trivial and the team successfully finished their heroic bicycle ride from OP 8 to OP 146 in time.

"I am extremely grateful for all the assistance that everyone has given me and the team in so many ways to help us complete this crazy but rewarding endeavour. It will have been well worth the effort when I hand over the money at Christmas to two charities that are so close to me and my family's hearts".

Team: Colonel Angus Loudon, Colonel Stuart Williams (Headquarters BFC) and his 18-year-old son Archie .

Support Team: 'The Two Taffs' - COS driver (LCpl Taff Marshall) and UNFICYP MT NCO (LCpl Taff Rees)

To find out more about the charities and what they do, please visit their websites: www.mariecurie.org.uk, www.maggiescentres.org.



UNPOL Officer in roadside rescue

On an afternoon in late October, it was lucky for one local woman that UNPOL Officer Milorad Asceric was in the right place at the right time, heading back to Dherynia station after a day's patrolling.

As he headed towards Paralimni, Officer Asceric noticed a woman on a scooter swerving across the road as she tried to avoid a cat. Next he was shocked to see her skid out of control and slide across the road before becoming wedged under a parked car with the scooter on top of her.

Officer Asceric stopped his vehicle immediately, and ran over to lift the scooter out of the way. He called an ambulance, and using his policeman's first aid training, immobilized her right leg and stabilized her other injuries. After 20 minutes, an ambulance came to take her to Dherynia Hospital.

To Officer Asceric's surprise, a week later he received a message from colleagues that a woman, Mrs Chalds Carolain, had been to the station to ask for the "officer who had helped to save her life".

The next day, the two were reunited for a coffee in Paralimni Centre, where Mrs. Carolain was thrilled to meet up with her hero and to pose for a photograph!



AN END OF YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE MEDICAL SECTION

'Tis the season – Common cold or flu?

By LtCol. Dr. Zsolt Fejes, Force Medical Officer

"I've got a cold, I've caught the flu"

These are well-known expressions and we have all experienced the unpleasant symptoms of diseases described by these phrases. The common cold is not a result of cold weather, exactly, however, the low temperature of inhaled air does slow down the proper function of the nasal cavity, which provides an opportunity to viruses for multiplication, and therefore the development of an illness. We do need to be careful at this time of year.

So what is the common cold?

Common cold is the most frequent illness in the world, the result of a virus infection whose pathogens are transmitted via airborne droplets or direct contact, most frequently through sneezing, coughing or direct contact with contaminated objects. Pathogens are usually most infectious on the day before the symptoms appear and during the first two days of sickness. The illness begins with an itchy, scratchy feeling in the throat or nose, accompanied by a runny nose. Patients can feel lethargic, fatigued, lose their appetite, and sometimes have a fever. A cough in this case is not dangerous, but is usually caused by the irritation of the postnasal drip. The illness lasts 5 to 7 days. Treatment aims to mitigate the unpleasant symptoms with vitamins, nasal sprays, ointments, and antipyretics. It is important to take in plenty of fluids and to get lots of rest to quicken the recovery process. Prescribing antibiotics is unnecessary in the case of the common cold.

What if it feels like my cold is getting worse?

The viral cold can become over-contaminated by bacteria. In this case symptoms are not limited to the nose, and a mild pain can appear in the throat and forehead. The watery nature of the nasal secretion changes, becomes thick, and alters its colour. Involving antibiotics in the treatment of this level of disease is preferable, so if you notice these kinds of symptoms, seek medical advice.


And influenza – the flu?

Appearing mostly in the form of epidemics, influenza is also an infectious disease. Its pathogens are the influenza A, B or C virus, which are transmitted easily via droplets, spread by coughing in crowded, indoor areas. Generally the incubation period is one or two days, after which, quite suddenly, fierce symptoms appear: high fever, aches and pains throughout the body, headache, lethargy, nausea and even diarrhoea. Once again, medicines mitigating the symptoms are preferred. Taking antibiotics is not effective and not recommended in this case. Severe chest pain and dry cough can accompany the influenza as symptoms. In this case we definitely need to think about the most frequent and serious complication/secondary infection of this disease, pneumonia. When high fever appears or the symptoms get worse, medical supervision is recommended.

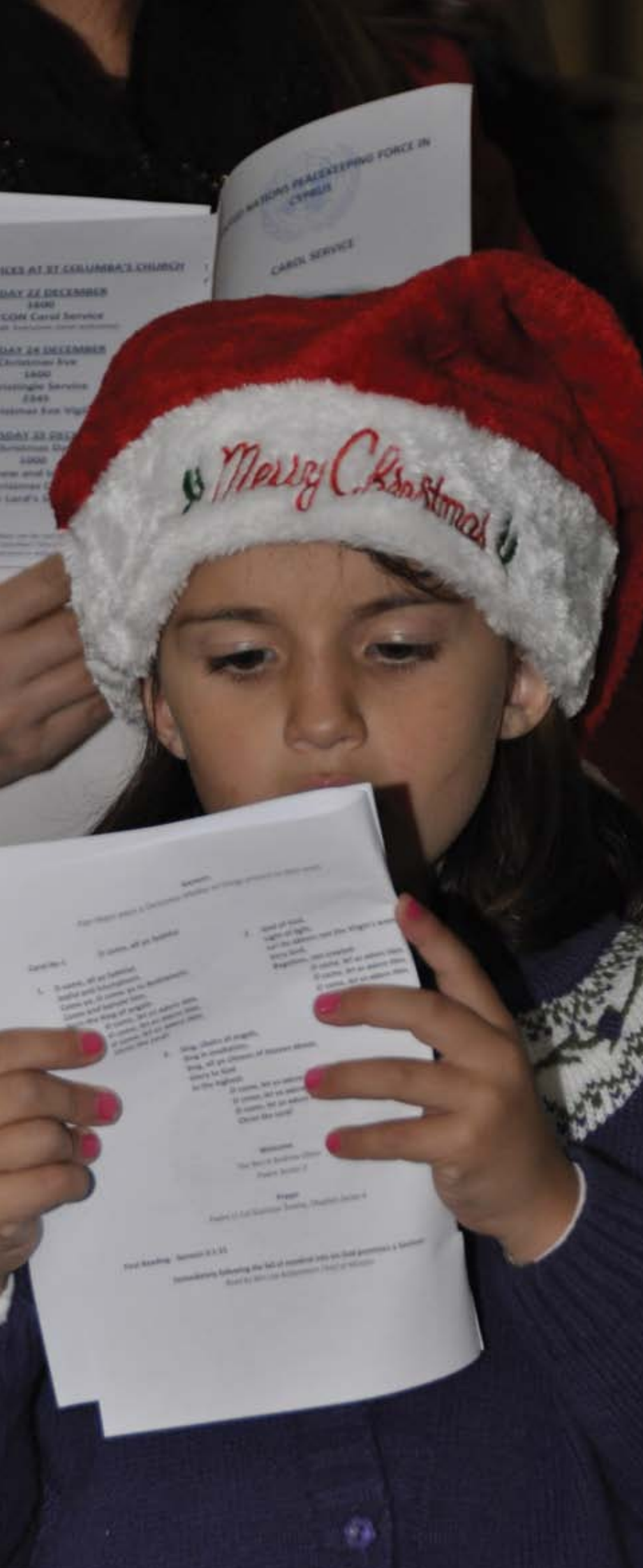
Prevention – stay healthy in the first place

As an oto-rhino-laryngologist, I recommend prevention as a remedy for the abovementioned diseases. Observe good hygiene rules and wash your hands regularly. Clothing should be accommodated to the weather, to help our bodies to maintain the preferred body temperature, and our noses to stop viruses. Healthy immune and vascular systems, being fit and in a good physical condition, can all ensure a more effective response to virus infections. The activity of our immune system is highly dependent on our body's Vitamin C saturation, which is why providing Vitamin C to our body is important in cool, windy, rainy weather. Medical Centres in all Sectors stock Multivitamin and Vitamin C, so I highly recommend a visit to your nearest Medical Officer to ask for their advice on prevention. Influenza vaccines should also be mentioned here. These contain inactivated or weakened pathogens giving 40-60% protection, but only if the vaccination takes place at the right time. Again, ask your local Medical Officer for advice!

Festive Fun at UNFICYP



Carols and cakes brought on a festive feeling at UNFICYP through December. A special Holiday Breakfast and Raffle gathered UNFICYP Components together at HQ on 20 December.



Season's greetings
to all and happy
holidays from the
Blue Beret team!



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