

BLUE BERET

The Magazine of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

May/June 2014



UNFICYP
Five Decades of
Humanitarian
Assistance // // // //



Featuring: A Very
Memorable 50th
Anniversary
Summer Medal
Parade // // // // // //



Plus: Spotlight on
Argentina, Hungary &
India /// Military Skills
Victory for the MFR ///
Hot Shots Around the
Sectors with the Force
Commander + MORE ///



BLUE BERET

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READER CONTRIBUTIONS

AN AUDIENCE WITH HIS HOLINESS

It was a proud and happy moment for a group of UNFICYP's Argentinean peacekeepers on 25 June when they travelled to the Vatican to meet with Pope Francis. Led by Commander Lt Col Miguel Salguero, it was the first time that Argentinean Blue Helmets have been received in St Peter's Square. During his address, His Holiness congratulated Argentina on more than 20 years of commitment to reaching a just and lasting peace in Cyprus.

Thanks to the Argentinean Contingent for sending us photographs of what was an emotional and historic visit to the Vatican!





50TH ANNIVERSARY Summer Medal Parade



On Thursday, 26 June, 216 troops and 7 police officers were awarded the United Nations Peacekeeping Medal during a moving ceremony at Nicosia International Airport that also paid tribute to 50 years of UN peacekeeping in Cyprus.



Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Mr. Hervé Ladsous attended the Parade, and presented outgoing UNFICYP Force Commander Major General Chao Liu with his medal as part of proceedings. Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cyprus Ms. Lisa Buitenhuis met many of the troops and police, pinning medals on the front ranks as the sun descended towards the horizon. Mr. Ladsous dedicated a commemorative plaque to pay tribute to the contributions of more than 100,000 uniformed men and women from 32 countries, civilian personnel and the 184 peacekeepers who have lost their lives in Cyprus. A special treat this year was the Band of the Irish Guards, providing an outstanding musical accompaniment to the Parade and performing the traditional Beating Retreat and Sunset Ceremony to lower the UN flag.





UNFICYP at Fifty

In Pictures

Continuing our look at the key events that shaped UNFICYP's history, we move to the 1980s, a decade of peacekeeping consolidation and on-going UN efforts to bring about a solution to the Cyprus problem. For peacekeeping personnel on the ground, this was the decade that shored up procedures for patrolling the buffer zone. Brian Urquhart, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs at the time summed up the importance of the tasks entrusted to Cyprus' UN peacekeepers:

"Peacekeeping, the great experiment in which you are all taking part is, in my view, a very important and very promising instrument of peace for the future... All of you here in UNFICYP are an essential part of this great task. You are, in the words of your Commander, fair, firm and friendly. What a magnificent example that is in a troubled world... I think there can be no better or more noble task for soldiers" - speaking at the BRITCON Medal Parade, Nicosia, 11 October 1985.

AN INSTRUMENT OF PEACE FOR THE FUTURE The 1980s

April 1981
The Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus is established.

22 October 1981
'The Gobbi Initiative' is introduced by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Hugo Gobbi of Argentina.

April 1982
Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar meets with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders, Spyros Kyprianou and Rauf Denktash, in Geneva.

August 1983
Another 'Initiative' is tabled by the UN.

1984
The 'Vienna Working Points' lead to 'Proximity Talks' and a 'Draft Agreement'.

THE BLUE BERET



JANUARY 1980



FOUR FROM UNFICYP GO TO OSLO NOBEL CEREMONY — 10th DECEMBER 1988



Left to right: Pte Henrik Joergensen of the Danish contingent; Maj Gen Gunther G Greindl, Force Commander; Sgt Kathy Burdett of Australia, a member of the UNFICYP civilian police and Cpl Jeffrey Docksey of the Canadian contingent.



The 1980s Continued...

29 March 1986

Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar presents a new 'Draft Framework Agreement'.

September 1988

Direct talks begin between Greek Cypriot leader Georgios Vassiliou and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash in the UN Protected Area at the residence of Special Representative Oscar Camili6n of Argentina.

1 May 1989

UNFICYP reaches an agreement on both sides to unman positions and cease patrols in certain sensitive locations in Nicosia.

1989

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar introduces his 'Summary of Ideas' as the basis of a comprehensive settlement.



ARGENTINA



ARGCON: A Brief History

The first 73 members of ARGCON arrived in Cyprus on 25 September 1993, in advance of a full battalion of 350 members commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Juan Manuel Durante. They took over command in the West part of the buffer zone from the Danish contingent. The arrival of ARGCON signalled a new era for UNFICYP, as traditional troop contributing countries like Denmark and Canada made way for new peacekeeping partners to support the force in Cyprus.

Over the 20 years since Argentina first deployed to the island, more than 12,000 Argentinean men and women have served here in the cause of peace, and four have made the ultimate sacrifice, losing their lives whilst serving in Cyprus. UNFICYP has had two Argentinean Force Commanders – Major General E. A. De Vergara and Major General Rafael Jose Barni.

In 2013, Argentina marked 20 years of peacekeeping in Cyprus, a milestone that reflects its national philosophy of supporting peace missions. This commitment has led 40,000 Argentinean peacekeepers to deploy with the UN since 1958.



Lt Col Durante leads the arrival of the first Argentinean Blue Berets in Cyprus



Argentina has always supported the United Nations' efforts to increase the participation of women in peacekeeping.



On patrol in Sector 1.

ARGCON FACTS

- TOTAL MILITARY: More than 12,000
- DEPLOYMENT: 27 September 1993
- LOCATIONS: Sector 1, the West
- CASUALTIES: 4

Visit of Minister of Defence - Argentine Medal Parade

UNFICYP peacekeepers from Sector 1 were awarded the United Nations Peacekeeping Medal during the Argentine Medal Parade on 5 June 2014. In the presence of His Excellency Mr. Agustín Oscar Rossi, Minister of Defence of Argentina, Ms. Lisa Buttenheim, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cyprus, and esteemed guests from Argentina and the diplomatic community, it was an impressive parade that ended with the traditional tango by the pool at San Martin Camp.

“Argentina, since it took over command of Sector 1 in 1993, has become a mainstay of our operations. Those of you lined up so splendidly here tonight represent our second-largest contingent, ‘holding the fort’ here in the west of the island... I have always said that the Argentinean contingent brings with it a special combination of professionalism, people skills and dedication, hand in hand with a natural southern hemisphere warmth that builds bridges within our multinational force. Over the years, these attributes have also earned our Argentinean peacekeepers the well-deserved respect and affection of the Cypriot people, especially here in their Troodos Mountains ‘neighbourhood’”.

- Excerpt from the remarks of SRSO Lisa Buttenheim at the Argentine Medal Parade, 5 June 2014.



It Takes a Contingent to Tango

Argentina's twenty years in Cyprus have brought great opportunities for cultural exchange, and its peacekeepers have helped to introduce a local appreciation for the national dance, the tango. A regular feature in the programme of events taking place at San Martin Camp, Argentina's tango performances bring welcome colour and passion to the post-medal parade entertainment!



UN FLIGHT

Since 1993, Argentina has provided the Mission's UN Flight capabilities, currently consisting of one Bell 212 and two Hughes helicopters.

HUNGARY

HUNCON: A Brief History

Hungarian participation in UNFICYP started with four military observers in August 1993 and increased to a 33-strong platoon that joined the Austrian-Hungarian-Slovenian peacekeeping battalion in 1995. In September 1997, the Hungarian contingent received a huge boost to a company-strength 105 troops. In 2004, when the profile of the Mission changed and the peacekeeping force was reduced, the Hungarian contribution became a single platoon. By 2007, 84 Hungarian peacekeepers were serving in the mission. In 2013, Hungary marked its 20th anniversary with UNFICYP.

HUNGARIANS IN SECTOR 4

Within the buffer zone, the Hungarian contingent serves alongside the Slovak contingent in Sector 4, a 65-kilometre stretch of land from Kaimakli village to the village of Dheryneia on the east coast of the island. Slovakia is in command of Sector 4 but Hungary contributes the second-largest number of troops and holds the position of Deputy Commander, currently filled by Lt Col Marton Szasz.

The Hungarians serve in the western part of sector 4. Their base is in the agricultural village of Athienou, 20km north-east of Nicosia. Under the command of the 1st platoon, eight Hungarian soldiers hold PB-91, which is the only active UN facility between Nicosia and Athienou. The Hungarian peacekeepers' camp bears the name of the nation's state founder, Szent István, or Saint Stephen in English. A troop of 39 members of the 1st platoon and four military observer and liaison officers are based there with the remaining members of the 1st platoon are deployed at PB-91.

GLOBAL PEACEKEEPING DUTIES

Today, the Hungarian Defense Forces contribute armed contingents, staff officers, experts, and unarmed military observers to support peace operations in 14 countries led by the UN, NATO, the EU and other international organizations. Hungarian military and law-enforcement personnel have served in 25 UN missions since 1998 and are currently contributing to the work of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

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The Blue Beret

November/December 1997

HUNGARY INCREASES PEACE-KEEPING CONTINGENT IN CYPRUS

In the past, a number of Hungarian officers and police have been posted as military observers to United Nations missions in Far East Asia (Vietnam and Cambodia) and in the Middle East (Iraq). Then, following the break of the Warsaw Pact, the Hungarian Government took the opportunity to outline an independent conception of the country's policy. This policy dictates that the Hungarian nation wishes to live in harmony with its neighbouring countries and to contribute to world peace. In practice, this contribution started with the posting of military observers to Africa (Mozambique and Angola), and to the Middle East (Kuwait).

The first Hungarian soldiers (a platoon strength) joined the Austrian Battalion in November 1995, when they took over responsibility of 1 Platoon, 1 Coy. They have, of course, gained a lot of experience since their arrival, and this year, the decision was taken to increase the Hungarian strength from 39 personnel to company level (105).

The selection of personnel started in June 1997 on a voluntary basis with a number of officers taking part in an international peace-keeping course.



Guard of Honour in Camp Izay

The first rotation took place on 24 September 1997, when the Hungarian Company took over 1 Coy's area of responsibility, located at Camp Izay, Athienou.

Hungary is proud to participate in this multi-national battalion of Austrian, Hungarian and Slovenian peace-keepers.



HUNCON FACTS

TOTAL MILITARY: More than 3,300
DEPLOYMENT DATE: August 1993
LOCATIONS: Sector 4 – Famagusta, Athienou, Pyla



Clockwise from top right: SRSG Lisa Buitenheim presents a Hungarian soldier with her UN Peacekeeping Medal during June's Summer Medal Parade; Force Commander Maj Gen Chao Liu with Hungarian troops in Sector 4 during his recent FC inspections; Flag ceremony for the 33-member platoon that arrived in 1995; A Hungarian peacekeeper receives his blue beret during a welcome ceremony in 1995.

INDIA



A Brief History

On 27 March 1964 at 0500 hours, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) became operational and Lieutenant General P. S. Gyani of India assumed command. After Lt Gen Gyani's departure, India would go on to provide 2 more esteemed UNFICYP Force Commanders in the critical first decade of the Mission: Gen. K.S. Thimayya (June to December 1965) whose untimely death whilst serving in Cyprus saw an outpouring of grief in the Blue Beret, and Lt Gen. Dewan Prem Chad (1970 – 1974), who held this vital role during the events of summer 1974, declaring the United Nations Protected Area.

INDIA AND PEACEKEEPING

India has been the largest troop contributor to UN missions since inception. To date, it has taken part in 43 missions with a total contribution exceeding 160,000 troops and a significant number of police personnel. Fourteen UN Force Commanders and numerous Police Commissioners have headed up components across various missions. The Indian Army has also been active in contributing women officers as Military Observers and Staff Officers and as members of medical units. In a landmark deployment, the first all-women contingent in peacekeeping history, a Formed Police Unit from India, was deployed in 2007 to the UN Operation in Liberia (UNMIL). As of June 2013, approximately 8,000 Indian peacekeepers, men and women, were deployed in nine UN missions, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Liberia, the Golan, Haiti, Lebanon, Abeyi, Cyprus and Ivory Coast.

INDIAN POLICE

Since 2004, India has contributed over 70 police officers to UNFICYP. Stationed throughout the island, the Indian police contingent continues to make an important contribution to UNFICYP. Current Indian contingent commander is Senior Superintendent Pupul Dutta Prasad.



The Indian High Commissioner greets Indian Police at UNFICYP HQ, 2004.

INDIA FACTS

- TOTAL MILITARY:** 16 (4 in the period 1964-65; 12 in the period 1969-76)
- TOTAL POLICE:** More than 70 since 2004
- FIRST DEPLOYMENT:** March 1964
- CASUALTIES:** 1



3 UNFICYP FORCE COMMANDERS

GUESTS OF HONOUR

The 50th Anniversary Brings Special Visitors to Cyprus Shores

On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary Summer Medal Parade, UNFICYP had the pleasure of hosting some very special guests, with very important and historical connections with the Mission.

HEAD OF UN PEACEKEEPING RETURNS TO CYPRUS

Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Mr. Hervé Ladsous was in Cyprus from 25-27 June at the tail end of a visit that also took in several of the UN's peacekeeping operations in the neighbouring Middle East.

On his second official visit to the island following a trip in May 2013, Mr. Ladsous met with Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot representatives, toured the Green Line in Old Nicosia, and delivered the keynote address at the 50th Anniversary Summer Medal Parade.

He congratulated UNFICYP on its success in maintaining peace and stability in the buffer zone and noted its high proportion of women peacekeepers; he thanked the 32 troop and police contributing countries that have enabled the mission to continue to operate since 1964, and underlined the importance of capitalizing on the 11 February Joint Declaration that re-launched the Cyprus Talks.



Pictured here at the narrowest part of the Cyprus buffer zone, Mr. Ladsous walks the Green Line, accompanied by Force Commander Major General Chao Liu. Speaking to media at Ledra-Lokmaci Crossing, Mr. Ladsous said that UNFICYP stood ready to support bi-communal projects to rehabilitate and revitalize Old Nicosia.

TWO CHIEFS OF STAFF...

Also returning to the island to enjoy the Summer Medal Parade were two former UNFICYP Chiefs of Staff, Francis Henn who served from 1972 to 1974, and Chris Coates who was posted in Cyprus from 1997 to 1999. It was wonderful for current UNFICYP staff to have the chance to talk with these former peacekeepers who held such important roles at respectively critical times in the Mission's history.

... AND THE FIRST EDITOR OF THE BLUE BERET!

The Public Information Office was thrilled to host David Lees, the creator and first editor of this very Magazine. At Wolseley Barracks, David managed to locate his old office and to point out the hall that was used for press conferences in 1964. He even met with Jack Zavallis, the son of the printing company owners who produced the Blue Beret back in the day and hosted David for lunch each week during his tour in Cyprus. It was a true honour for the current Blue Beret team to meet David and his wife Maria, and we hope to see them back in Cyprus again soon!



Above top: SRSR Lisa Buttenheim (left), UNFICYP Spokesperson Michel Bonnardeaux (centre) and David Lees (right) chat after the Summer Medal Parade; Above: On a Green Line Tour during their visit to Cyprus are: David Lees (third from left), Francis Henn (fourth from right) and Chris Coates (third from right).

A TRIBUTE TO RETURNING PEACEKEEPERS

Danish Veterans



On 30 April 2014, a group of returning DANCON members visited the UNPA where they had a briefing from Chief of Staff Colonel Angus Loudon and laid flowers at the UNFICYP globe memorial. They toured Nicosia International Airport before finishing up the day at Ledra Palace Hotel; here, in the presence of Danish Ambassador in Cyprus Mr. Casper Klynge, the veteran peacekeepers unveiled a new commemorative plaque paying tribute to the 22,623 Danish soldiers who have served in Cyprus since 1964. The day closed with a special reception at Ledra Palace Hotel.

SWEDCON Veterans



UNFICYP is honoured to receive regular visits from Swedish Police veterans each year; on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Mission, UNFICYP has also hosted several visits of former Swedish troops who served in Cyprus. On 1 May, the first group of SWEDCON veterans arrived to tour the UNPA and Nicosia Airport and, on 28 May a larger group of 125 Swedes made the trip to UNFICYP. One returning veteran was delighted to discover that Mr. Savvas Georgiou, was still operating his tailoring business here on the Blue Beret Camp. Mr. Georgiou began as the tailor for the Swedish battalion in Famagusta in 1964 and received assistance from the Swedes to relocate his business to Nicosia in 1974. As you can see in the photo, above right, it was a heartwarming reunion as the two old friends remembered the labours of transporting a sewing machine or two!

AND CIVILIANS TOO...

Chief of Mission Hosts Civilian Personnel at 50th Anniversary Reception



For five decades now, UNFICYP's long-standing civilian component has quietly carried on supporting and collaborating with the military and police peacekeepers charged with maintaining peace and stability on the island. Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cyprus and Chief of Mission Lisa Buttenheim paid tribute to this branch of the UNFICYP family in a special 50th anniversary reception on Thursday, 12 June 2014.

UNFICYP's civilian component currently numbers 37 international staff and 110 locally hired colleagues. They work in substantive areas, including civil affairs, political affairs, and public information, and make up the majority in UNFICYP's mission support component, from engineering to transport, supply, engineering, procurement, finance and human resources.

During the event held at the Chief of Mission's Residence, SRSB Buttenheim paid tribute to the commitment of civilian personnel, and expressed her appreciation for their hard work and dedication, on the occasion of UNFICYP's fifty years.



Civilian staff serving with UNFICYP in the 1960s.



CIVILIAN STAFF IN UNFICYP

THE SPIRIT of the United Nations is well reflected in the civilian staff of the United Nations Force in Cyprus.

There are presently some 43 civilians from 25 countries of the world who are participating in the tasks of the United Nations Force in Cyprus. They are members of the United Nations Secretariat who have come from New York, Geneva and other places. They represent nearly 25% of the countries in the United Nations.

Countries Represented

There are 5 members who come from Sweden and there are 4 from Ireland.

Denmark, Norway and the United States of America have 3 members each on the staff.

There are 2 members from each of the following countries:- Australia, Canada,

Mexico, the Netherlands and the Philippines.

The remaining number are made up by one each from Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Ceylon, Chile, Columbia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, India, New Zealand, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad, the United Arab Republic and the United Kingdom.

Staff Function

The staff works at HQ UNFICYP and is divided between Wolseley Barracks in Nicosia and No 2 site on the edge of Nicosia airfield and its function is to assist the Commander of the Force in the organisation and administration of UNFICYP matters.

The staff consists of Political Advisers, Information, Administrative and Finance Officers. To assist the officers of these departments there are Secretaries, Clerks, Radio Operators, Drivers and Security Guards.



A FORCE FOR PEACE. A FORCE FOR CHANGE. A FORCE FOR THE FUTURE

The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers

On 29 May, in a ceremony outside the Mobile Force Reserve Headquarters on Blue Beret Camp, UNFICYP Chief of Mission Lisa Buitenhuis laid flowers in memory of the 184 peacekeepers who lost their lives serving in Cyprus, and read the message of the Secretary-General for the occasion.

“United Nations peacekeeping has a long and proud history, with more than one million peacekeepers having served in more than 70 operations on four continents since its establishment in 1948. Looking to the future, we can be confident that as new challenges emerge, United Nations peacekeeping will evolve to meet them.

Today, more than 116,000 UN personnel from more than 120 countries serve in 16 peacekeeping operations. At great personal risk, these military, police and civilian personnel help stabilize communities, protect civilians, promote the rule of law and advance human rights. Last year, 106 Peacekeepers perished carrying out their duty under the UN flag, bringing the total number of lives lost in the history of peacekeeping to more than 3,200. We mourn the passing of every one of these courageous individuals. We grieve with their friends and families

and we recommit ourselves to ensure that their contributions to the cause of peace will never be forgotten.

United Nations peacekeeping is modernizing to ensure that it can tackle tomorrow’s peace and security challenges. It is deploying new technologies such as unarmed, unmanned aerial vehicles, refining its practices to better protect civilians, and boosting the representation of women among its ranks while strengthening its partnerships with regional organizations. The United Nations is improving logistics and administrative practices, strengthening infrastructure and taking other steps to harness the power of our personnel. Our goal is to ensure that peacekeeping is a cost effective, valuable investment that brings enormous benefits and, above all, saves lives.”

Extract from the message of the Secretary-General on the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, 29 May 2014

The full version of the message along with more information about the day can be found at: www.un.org/en/events/peacekeepersday/2014/sgmessage.shtml

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

On 5 June, UNFICYP's Environmental Committee organized a tree-planting ceremony outside the HQ Building to mark World Environment Day. Chief of Mission Lisa Buttenheim was on hand to plant the new greenery, part of UNFICYP's greater commitment to 'Greening the Blue' that includes the Green Park, a recycling initiative inaugurated on the occasion of WED 2013.



#TimeToAct

To End Sexual Violence in Conflict

In June UNFICYP lent its support to the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict which took place in London, co-chaired by William Hague, Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, and Angelina Jolie. Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cyprus, Lisa Buttenheim led female UNFICYP personnel from the military, police and civilian components, including the Mission's focal points for Gender, Conduct and Discipline, and HIV/AIDS, in a photo shoot in solidarity with the campaign. Members of UNFICYP's multinational Mobile Force Reserve, which includes troops from the United Kingdom, Argentina, Slovakia and Hungary, also united under the slogan for the campaign – it's #TimeToAct to end sexual violence in conflict. The largest-ever gathering of its kind, the Summit from 10-13 June 2014 aimed to create irreversible momentum against sexual violence in conflict and deliver practical action that impacts those on the ground, including ending impunity for perpetrators.



MFR VICTORIOUS

Military Skills Champions May 2014

What does it take to win UNFICYP's legendary military skills competition? As our photo gallery shows, an early start, sweat and teamwork are a good combination of winning qualities. It's great to see our UN peacekeepers honing their skills and fitness. Well done to the Mobile Force Reserve winners, and to Sector 1's Team A in 2nd place, and HQ in 3rd place.



History of the MSC

How long have UNFICYP's Blue Berets been hoisting that Mil Skills trophy above their shoulders? Sporting competitions for fitness, training and morale have been a big part of the experience of touring in Cyprus, from the famous Danish trek in the mountains, to the Falling Plate Comp that featured throughout early issues of the Blue Beret Magazine. The MSC trophy in its current form has been handed out every year since the early 1980s – here's to more than 30 years of the UNFICYP Military Skills Competition!



HOT SHOTS

Around the Sectors with the Force Commander

The Force Commander's Inspections took UNFICYP's Force Photographer SSgt Roman Chovanec to all corners of the buffer zone in the past few months. We feature some of the hot shots from Sectors 1, 2 and 4, and from the HQ where the MFR, FMPU, Slovak Engineers and UN Flight all passed the inspection with flying colours. This was the last cycle of inspections for Force Commander Major General Chao Liu who will complete his tenure with UNFICYP in August.



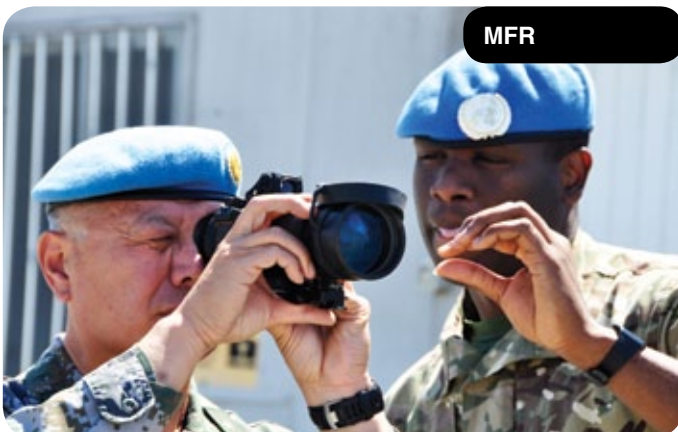
Sector 2



Sector 4
Serbian Camp



UN Flight



MFR



Sector 1

VIP VISITS KEEP UNFICYP ON THE MOVE IN MAY

First trip to Cyprus for US Vice-President



It was a busy few days in the lead-up to the arrival of the 47th Vice-President of the United States of America Joe Biden and his wife Dr. Jill Biden on 21 May. Their respective programmes included a tour of the Green Line in Old Nicosia for Dr. Biden, accompanied by UNFICYP Chief of Mission Lisa Buttenheim. The Vice-President met with Cyprus leaders Mr. Nicos Anastasiades and Mr. Dervis Eroglu at Ledra Palace Hotel, also in the company of Ms. Buttenheim in her capacity as Acting Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Cyprus, for discussions on the re-launched Cyprus Talks. These high-level events generated plenty of extra business for Sector 2, with the Irish Guards providing essential support. The UN Police Component, Mobile Force Reserve and Force Military Police Unit were also instrumental in ensuring that the time spent by the VIP visitors in Sector 2 went off without a hitch.

Slovak Deputy Prime Minister in Nicosia



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic Miroslav Lajčák was in town from 26-27 May. He hosted a reception attended by representatives of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities at Ledra Palace Hotel to mark 25 years of the Bi-Communal Initiative held under Slovak auspices. Later he delivered a lecture on European Unity, Cooperation and Coexistence to students at the University of Cyprus. On May 27 he met with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Lisa Buttenheim. They discussed the ongoing efforts towards settlement of the Cyprus problem, the strategic direction of UNFICYP, and Slovakia's contribution to the peacekeeping mission, which currently numbers 157 troops and 1 police officer. Together they laid a wreath to the Memorial of Fallen Peacekeepers at the Blue Beret Camp. The Minister visited Slovak troops in Sector 4 where he decorated them with a "veteran medal" for service, and took time to chat about their duties, responsibilities and life in UNFICYP.

AN ARMY MARCHES ON ITS STOMACH ... AND SO DO UN PEACEKEEPERS!

Sector 1 Wins UNFICYP Catering Contest

By Capt Adam Harrison, Force Supply Officer

Tuesday 27 May saw UNFICYP Peacekeepers take part in a Military Skills Competition of a different flavour. Armed only with knives, rolling pins and the UNPA Cafeteria, kitchen chefs from all three Sectors were tasked with creating a three course meal for 10 people in under 1 hour. An esteemed panel of judges led by Force Commander Major General Chao Liu enjoyed a succession of delicious dishes – entrée, main and dessert from each Sector – all whipped up using only ingredients which can be ordered from the Ration Unit, proving that you don't need fancy grocery items to serve up a first-class feast fit for hungry peacekeepers.

Sector 1 was declared the winner after dazzling the judges with a tower of rice stuffed with a medley of vegetables. This was followed by roasted pork loin with an orange glaze and a side of rustic potatoes, and a crepe stuffed with banana, a scoop of ice cream and a garnish of dulce de leche.



MINE CLEARANCE PROJECT COMPLETED

Cambodian Team Departs the Island

After a successful round of mine clearance efforts in Mammari (see our report in the March/April issue of the Blue Beret), the Cambodian demining team moved in late May to OP146 in Sector 4 to work on a second Suspected Mine Hazard Area. The 21-strong team completed the work in the East on 10 June, finding a number of metal fragments that were later destroyed, and taking us one step closer to a mine-free Cyprus.

UNFICYP Chief of Mission Lisa Buttenheim spoke for all the mission when she farewelled the team a few days later, wishing them luck on their return to their demining duties with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). She presented each member of the team with a certificate of appreciation. Our Cambodian friends will be missed by all who had the pleasure of getting to know them!



Chief of Mission Lisa Buttenheim visits the mine clearance project in Mammari in Sector 1.



Chief of Staff Col Angus Loudon, right, with Site Supervisor Lt Suon and Maj Jo Ramsumair, checks in on progress in Sector 4.



LYNN HASTINGS

Senior Adviser

Ms. Lynn Hastings is a Canadian national who, after practising law in Toronto, served as Director of the OSCE Human Rights Department in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1998-2000 and then joined the United Nations as the Deputy Director of the Human Rights Unit in East Timor. In 2001 she returned to the Balkans as Executive Director of the Housing and Property Directorate and then moved to the Middle East in 2003 as the Chief of Staff and the Senior Legal Advisor to the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. During her time there, she was appointed the UN Representative to the Quartet Special Envoy on the withdrawal from Gaza by the Government of Israel and served in Beirut as Adviser to the UN Secretary General's Personal Representative after the 2006 Israeli-Lebanon war. In 2011, she moved to Pakistan as the Country Director of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs where she served until her appointment as Senior Adviser, UNFICYP, in June 2014.

DANA MITIC & MARIA MINADAKI NEW CHIEFS IN MISSION SUPPORT



Supply & Engineering

It's been such a busy Blue Beret this year that we have only just had the chance to profile two key arrivals with the Mission Support Component. Ms. Zvezdana (Dana) Mitic, pictured left, arrived in January as the new Chief of Supply. Originally from Serbia, Dana spent 10 years in Macedonia, where she trained as a Chemical Engineer and worked for 5 years in the private sector. Dana joined the World Food Programme (WFP) in 1999 and worked in Skopje, Serbia and Kosovo. Her peacekeeping career began in 2001 in Sierra Leone and continued in Liberia. After 9 years in West Africa, she moved to UNIFIL in Lebanon in 2010. Dana is married with a 10 year old daughter - she met her husband on the very first day she joined WFP! She used to be a semi-professional volleyball player as well as a serious runner of short and middle distances but since arriving in Cyprus has only managed to have her two bikes on display, one in the office and one at home! Taking on the role of Chief of Engineering is Ms. Maria Minadaki, pictured below, third from left, at the World Environment Day tree-planting that she organized under her other 'hat', Chair of the UNFICYP Environment Committee. Maria arrived in Cyprus in April and is well and truly immersed in the challenges of maintenance, repair, and keeping the camp 'green', among numerous other tasks!





Next Issue: Farewell to the Force Commander & Welcome to Maj Gen Kristen Lund of Norway!

Plus: 50th Anniversary Focus on Slovakia, New Zealand, Nepal, Uruguay, Peru, The Netherlands, & Bolivia //

A FIRE SAFETY REMINDER FROM FIRE OFFICER NADEEM PAUL QADIR

In case you haven't noticed, it is HOT. It's that time of year when we need to take extra special precautions and remember our fire prevention lessons!

THIS SUMMER:

- Don't** throw away lit cigarettes and matches
- Don't** smoke in offices and accommodation buildings. Use only designated smoking areas
- Don't** throw away reflective materials like empty bottles or broken mirrors
- Don't** park your car near grass or shrubbery and don't leave your vehicle engine running. A hot engine could start a fire!
- Don't** fire up your barbecues anywhere outside the areas designated and NEVER leave BBQs unattended. Once your steak is done, use water or sand/soil to extinguish the fire
- Don't** use water if a fire takes place where electricity poles are involved
- Don't** start your patrol without having at least 4 fire beaters in your patrol vehicle. Check your dry powder fire extinguisher and medical kits within your vehicle!
- Don't** risk your life to fight a fire. **Don't** fight Buffer Zone grass or forest fires alone. Always attack the fire in groups
- Don't** fight Buffer Zone grass fires up or down wind, but always from a crosswind direction
- Don't** forget that when responding to fire emergencies within the Buffer Zone, some areas have mines present
- Don't** forget the UNFICYP Fire/Emergency Telephone No: 22-61-4777
Call Signs: 9- INDIA / 9-X-RAY / 9-ZOLO, CHANNEL 14 UNPA

South Cyprus Emergency number-112

North Cyprus Emergency number-199

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2013, the UNFICYP Security Section/Fire Unit received 220 fire emergency calls requiring a response within and around the UN buffer zone. Of these calls, 184 fires directly affected UN personnel and property. These statistics reinforce the importance of Fire Safety, and serve as a reminder of the Fire Risk and dangers to UN personnel operating within the mission area and throughout Cyprus.

BLUE BERET



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