

Helping the Pilgrims' Way



The Blue Beret

July 2005

Everyone
Won in
Pyla



THE BLUE BERET

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Briefing the Security Council in late June (pages 4 and 5) after visiting the region, USG Prendergast reported that the gap on issues of substance between the two sides appeared wide, which, combined with the apparent lack of confidence between them, did not bode well for efforts to establish common ground.

Prendergast stressed that the Secretary-General believed the starting point for the UN right now must be full respect for the decision taken by the voters on both sides in the 2004 referendum and that this should guide the Organisation's approach to resumed negotiations.

True, the UN could not consider a solution other than the kind envisaged in Security Council resolutions, he said, but Greek Cypriots should feel confident that the concerns that led them to vote as they did are kept in mind in any future process based on the UN plan.

This calls for a prioritized and exhaustive list of proposals for negotiation, he noted, since it is difficult to address a long list of concerns in an orderly manner when there is no indication of their relative importance.

The USG went on to caution that this approach would not help if it undermined majority support on the Turkish Cypriot side for the UN plan. They too must feel sure that any renewed process keeps their concerns in mind, especially considering their efforts for a solution and the fact that they had seen little or no improvement in their situation since the referendum.

Both sides should focus on their overriding common interest – the need to agree to revisions so that the plan could command majority support in their respective communities. A settlement calls for compromise, which in turn calls for leadership with vision, courage and political will. It will only be possible, USG Prendergast said, if the parties proceed with respect and understanding for one another's concerns and a desire for an early settlement.

Editorial

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London Tribute

UNFICYP observed two minutes silence at midday on 14 July in tribute to the victims of the London bombings, as did the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities of the island. The morning after the atrocity, Force Commander Maj. Gen. Figoli conveyed the mission's condolences and sympathy to UNFICYP's British Contingent.

On the day of the actual bombings, 7 July, the Secretary-General, who was attending the G-8 meetings in Gleneagles, Scotland, spoke of his devastation at the news.

"These vicious acts have cut us all to the core, for they are an attack on humanity itself. My thoughts and prayers are with all those who have lost loved ones, all those who were hurt, all those who were traumatized by this tragedy. I grieve with all Londoners at the wounds that have been inflicted on this wonderful city – this city that is home to people from so many countries and cultures – and express my solidarity with the Government and people of the United Kingdom in this hour of trial."



Adamantios Vassilakis (left), Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for July, and Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom

The Security Council condemned the 7 July terrorist attacks without reservation as "barbaric" and expressed its utmost determination to combat terrorism in accordance with its Charter responsibilities. By unanimous adoption of resolution 1611 (2005), the Council, meeting just hours after the deadly bomb blasts shook London, expressed its deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims of the attacks and their families, and to the people and Government of the United Kingdom. The Council urged all States, in accordance with their obligations under resolution 1373 (2001), to cooperate actively in efforts to find and bring to justice the perpetrators, organisers and sponsors of those barbaric acts.

CANADA Day – A Remembrance Service ...



Since 1964, 28 Canadians who came to Cyprus "In the Service of Peace" have died while on assignment with the mission. Two helmets pay tribute to their sacrifice, marking the memorial in Wolseley Barracks. It is believed they belonged to Pte. Kohlman and Pte. Berger, killed during the hostilities of the mid-1970s. Their families have not forgotten. Pte. Kohlman's parents visited in May 1998, and Pte. Berger's parents visited in 1996.

On Canada Day, 1 July this year, an early morning ceremony took place at the memorial. Refurbished by the soldiers in Sector 2, a re-dedication service was officiated over by Padre Durant. Those present included CO CANCON Capt. Dan Zegarac, Field Security Officer Ross Wickware and his wife and 2i/c Sector 2 Maj. Howard Wilkinson. The touching ceremony ended with the sound of the lone bugler (courtesy of Sector 2) echoing over the grounds, a somber reminder of the many who served and made the ultimate sacrifice.

... and Remembering Canada

Since 1 July 1867, when Canada became a dominion, Canadians have held celebrations to mark the birth of their country. This year, a celebration took place within the UNPA, hosted by the Commander, Canadian Contingent (CANCON) and assisted by those few "Canucks" who are part of the UN family here in Cyprus.

Capt. Dan Zegarac opened the festivities with a short speech, welcoming friends and colleagues to the International Golf Club Nicosia. Canadian libations were served up, including a lethally innocuous concoction called "Moose Milk", while genuine maple syrup complemented a selection of snacks and pancakes provided by Michael and the staff of the International Cafeteria.

A relaxed and comfortable evening was enjoyed by a gathering that included the Chief of Mission, the Force Commander, representatives from UNOPS Bicomunal Development Programme, UNCIVPOL and UNFICYP colleagues and friends. Several international representatives stopped by to share in the festivities. UNFICYP's Canadians thank all who took the time to join them in celebrating this wonderful event.



Mick Raine, head of the Demining Cell, is welcomed by Canada Day committee member Anne Bursey



USG Prendergast briefs Security Council on Cyprus Situation

On 22 June, USG Prendergast briefed the Security Council about his "pulse-taking" visit to Cyprus, Greece and Turkey between 30 May and 7 June, concluding that the gap on substance appeared to be wide while confidence between the parties did not seem high.

The USG said all parties in Cyprus wanted reactivation of the UN's good offices and accepted that the UN plan should serve as the basis for resumed negotiations. There were cordial contacts between political figures on both sides in an effort to promote mutual understanding, and there had been useful contacts at other levels, too. Of interest also, was an independent bicomunal survey of grass-roots attitudes on potential changes to the UN plan that had found opinion on both sides encouraging insofar as it might be possible to make certain changes that would secure majority support for the UN plan in both communities.

Despite those important positives, he said, on the negatives side, the gap between the stated positions of the parties on substance appeared to be wide, while confidence between them did not seem high. Those two factors, especially in combination, made efforts to establish common ground extremely difficult. The SG believed that the starting point for the UN must be full respect for the decision of the voters on each side of the 24 April 2004 referendum, and that this position should guide the Organisation's approach.

The USG noted that more than three quarters of Greek Cypriot voters

had rejected the finalized UN plan. While the UN could not countenance a solution other than the kind envisaged in Council resolutions, the concerns of highest priority that had led Greek Cypriots to vote in that way would most certainly have to be addressed in any future process based on the UN plan – and the Greek Cypriot electorate must have confidence that their concerns would be borne in mind in a renewed process. In that context, a prioritized and exhaustive list of concrete proposals for negotiation would be an important advance, because it was very hard to address a long list of concerns in an ordered way if they were expressed without modulation or indication of their relative importance.

At the same time, USG Prendergast stressed, it would not help the search for a solution if Greek Cypriot concerns were met in a way that lost majority support for the UN plan on the Turkish Cypriot side. The Turkish Cypriot electorate must have confidence that they too would be borne in mind in any renewed process. Meanwhile, confidence on the Turkish Cypriot side and in Turkey, whose role would be critical, was diminished by the fact that, although a clear majority of Turkish Cypriot voters supported a compromise UN plan finalised by an agreed procedure, they had seen

little acknowledgement of their efforts to achieve a solution and little or no improvement in their situation since the referendum.

While it was natural for each party to seek to protect its own interests, it was important to encourage both sides to focus on their overriding common interest: the need to agree on revisions so that the UN plan could command majority support not only in their own community, but also in the other. Outsiders could help, but it was the parties who must summon the vision, courage and political will needed to make a settlement, which would require compromise. Leaders had to lead, not just follow, their supporters, and a settlement would only be possible if the parties acted in a way that conveyed respect, understanding for one another's concerns and a desire for an early settlement.

Responsibilities also fell on Greece and Turkey, which must keep in mind that the Cyprus problem should be settled on its own merits and in the interests, first and foremost, of the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, the USG stated. The two countries' strong support for the SG's mission of good offices must be matched by a readiness to think afresh on certain aspects of the problem, so that a solution could be achieved on the basis of a revised UN plan.

As for the next steps, he said the SG was mindful of his own responsibilities and remained committed to assisting the parties to achieve a settlement. Moreover, the persistence of the status quo on the island was unacceptable, as the Security Council had made clear on several occasions. At the same time, the premature launch of an intensive new process would be inadvisable. It was to be hoped that the Council would agree that nothing positive would be served by a new effort that ended, as had the previous two, in high-profile failure or frustrating stalemate.

USG Prendergast said that, as things stood, the SG believed that it would be prudent to proceed very carefully and intended to reflect on the future of his mission of good offices in the period ahead. He would take full account of the Council's reaction and would also be closely observing developments on the ground, particularly any evolution in the position of the parties in light of the assessment and observations made that day. Depending on the evolution of events and attitudes on the island, it might become appropriate to consider appointing a Special Adviser, who would engage the parties and explore whether the necessary common ground existed, or could be built, to enable the resumption of full-scale negotiations.

USG Prendergast said that the Secretary-General's aim in asking him to travel to the region had been to find out where the parties stood, to seek their views on what, if anything, the UN should be doing in the current circumstances. In Cyprus, he had met Greek Cypriot leader Tassos Papadopoulos three times and Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat twice. In Greece and Turkey, he had met their respective Foreign Ministers, as well as other officials and prominent Greek and Turkish personalities.

He said that on the Greek Cypriot side, Mr. Papadopoulos had said he was eager for negotiations to resume under the SG's auspices and that his people were suffering from occupation and uncertainty and wanted a solution. On procedure, he had said new negotiations should be carefully prepared without

deadlines, arbitration of substantive issues by the UN or third parties, and that only a settlement plan agreed by the parties should be submitted to referendum. At the same time, he agreed that negotiations should not be open-ended.

On substantive issues, Mr. Papadopoulos had said that the plan finalised by the SG last year gave the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkey "nearly everything they wanted, more than they needed and more than was fair", he said. In his view, that was why a majority of Greek Cypriots had rejected the plan, while a majority of Turkish Cypriots had accepted it. He believed that future negotiations could only be successful if the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkey understood that and they were prepared to meet outstanding Greek Cypriot concerns during the course of negotiations.

He said that the substantive points that the Greek Cypriot side would like to pursue touched on most of the main issues dealt with in the plan, including governance, security, citizenship, residency, property, territory, economic and financial issues, transition periods and guarantees of implementation. Asked by the Greek Cypriot side for his initial reaction to their ideas, the USG had said that he thought the other side would find daunting the breadth and depth of what the Greek Cypriot side had elaborated and encouraged them to produce a list of focused, finite, manageable, prioritized proposals.

On the Turkish Cypriot side, he said, Mr. Talat had said he wanted to see a settlement as soon as possible based on the UN plan and that he would like to see intensive negotiations under the SG's auspices to achieve such a settlement within a reasonably short time. He had stressed the desire of his people for an urgent settlement. On procedure, Mr. Talat favoured a process with UN arbitration and clear time limits for negotiation, since he was concerned that the negotiations might otherwise drag on indefinitely.

He said that Mr. Talat had stressed that Turkish Cypriots were disappointed at the Security Council's failure to react to the SG's good offices report of 28 May 2004, particularly insufficient acknowledgement by the international community of the fact that a majority of those who had voted on the Turkish Cypriot side in the referendum had accepted a compromise UN plan and that the Council's lack of action to help ease unnecessary restrictions that had the effect of unjustifiably isolating and punishing the Turkish Cypriots. That lack of response should be remedied and, should negotiations resume, there should be some sort of mechanism in place so that each side would know their fate should the negotiations end in failure resulting from the actions of the other side.

On substance, he said, Mr. Talat had said that his people had been prepared to accept the UN plan, not because it was ideal, but as a compromise. He had stressed that certain key features – political equality, partnership, bizonality, bicommunality, the guarantee and alliance treaties – were the essence of the plan and should not be eroded. Other points of concern that the Turkish Cypriots would like to discuss in future negotiations included territory, property, resettlement of dislocated Turkish Cypriots, financing, and guarantees against usurpation of the settlement arrangements by either side.

He had told Mr. Talat of the SG's surprise at the Security Council's lack of response to his report, but reminded him that 76% of the Greek Cypriots who had voted had rejected the finalised UN plan, which was a problem not just for the Greek Cypriots, but for both



USG Prendergast briefing the Security Council

sides. Mr. Talat had said that he would be prepared to entertain minor changes within the parameters of the plan, but it was very important to have a clear and final list of demands from the Greek Cypriot side. However, he regarded the concerns raised by the other side, as well as outside the parameters of the plan and unacceptable to the Turkish Cypriots.

In Athens, the Greek Government had expressed a wish to see a resumption of the SG's mission of good offices, he said. In that context, Greek representatives had described the UN plan as the first comprehensive solution framework ever put forward, and it had come close to delivering a settlement. However, Greece believed that on certain aspects the plan reflected the fears of the past more than it did the challenges of the future with Cyprus as a member of the EU. The Greek Government would want to see the two sides in cooperative negotiations based on the UN plan, so that outstanding concerns could be addressed and a settlement achieved.

He said that in Ankara, the Turkish Government said that they wished to see a settlement based on the UN plan, and that Turkey would welcome an intensive process under the SG's auspices. For that to happen, the Turkish Government believed that it was important for the Greek Cypriot side to furnish a clear and exhaustive list of changes it would like to see to the plan. The Turkish Government stressed the sense of frustration in Turkey at the Security Council's lack of response to the SG's report of 28 May 2004, saying that that made it difficult to persuade people that Turkish and Turkish Cypriot efforts for a solution were adequately acknowledged.

The SG had conveyed to Prime Minister Erdogan his surprise and disappointment that the Council had not reacted to the report or to last year's developments, he said. Also, both the Turkish Cypriots and Turks had expressed disillusion, as well as disappointment, at what they perceived as inadequate steps by the EU to ease Turkish Cypriot isolation, which they felt they had been led to expect.

... USG said all parties in Cyprus wanted reactivation of the UN's good offices and accepted that the UN plan should serve as the basis for resumed negotiations...

... the SG was mindful of his own responsibilities and remained committed to assisting the parties to achieve a settlement...



Bins on Trial!



Bins are colour coded for each commodity of waste:

Mixed Glass - Purple Bins
Cans - Yellow Bins
Plastic Bottles - Red Bins
Paper - Blue Bins



The UNPA has at long last "Gone Green" by acquiring some environmentally friendly waste bins. These bins are for a trial period of three months, that is between July and September. If, and only if, the trial is successful, will they become a permanent fixture on the UNPA.

The bins are located in the area of the HIVE in the BRITCON Married Quarter Area and also outside of the International Cafeteria in the UNPA. An additional paper bin is located outside the Public Information Office (*wonder why? - Editor*)

This is a free facility and if it is to become a permanent asset, we will all have to make a great deal of effort during the trial period to ensure that we fill the bins with the correct commodity.

All living and working in the UNPA should remember that only if we look after our environment, will it look after us.

Sector 4 Donor Squad!



Regular blood donor, Capt. Stanislav Sikel, Sector Ops Officer

UNFICYP soldiers came to the rescue, yet again, when the call for help came. On 12 July, members of Sector 4 donated blood to the local community – for the fifth time.

In the Medical Centre, Athienou, 20 Slovaks and 17 Hungarians queued up and took part in this voluntary action. In spite of a very busy work schedule, they managed to answer the urgent request from the blood bank of the Nicosia Makarios III General Hospital. CO Sector 4, Lt. Col. Martin Bačko, was also in attendance.

In the past, Sector 4 members have donated blood to the blood bank of the General Hospital in North Nicosia, and also to the Larnaca General Hospital. Most of the blood is for thalassaemia patients, a blood disorder which is common in the Mediterranean region.

The soldiers from Sector 4 were very glad they were able to contribute to this very worthy cause – benefitting patients island-wide.

Helping the Pilgrims' Way ... At Ayia Marina ...

One of life's most rewarding moments is when we find ourselves in a position to help others, especially when it is something impossible to do alone. So it was with UNFICYP's Sector 4 soldiers on Sunday 17 July, when they provided transport, security and medical assistance for Greek Cypriots attending the mass in the small chapel of Ayia Marina located in the buffer zone.

Activities began at 6.00 a.m. Sector 4 soldiers had, however, been up since the crack of dawn, getting ready for their day of goodwill. Approximately 30 members of the Slovak Contingent, plus members of UNCIVPOL, were present at the checkpoint, along with their vehicles, when the first pilgrims arrived. Most were from the village of Dherinia but some came from nearby villages. This event takes place every year with an average of 800 attending the service. This year, UNFICYP soldiers escorted 976 pilgrims, some in UN vehicles and some travelling in their own vehicles. In all, 87 civilian cars were escorted to and from the chapel.

It was a hot Sunday, yet the soldiers were very happy to be of help and to meet with the people. Special mention should be made of Pte. Marian Sekerka, who alone transferred more than 80 pilgrims throughout an exhausting but exhilarating day. Pte. Jozef Pilar so impressed one of the old ladies, that she gave him a white flower, a gentle gesture which he



found very moving. The best present for the soldiers' hard work were the smiles and words of gratitude they received during the course of the day.

By 12.45 p.m., the celebrations, which had been prepared in collaboration with the local municipality, were over. The Mayor of Dherinia gave a short speech, thanking the UN soldiers for all they had done. The officers of Sector 4 were then invited to lunch with the Mayor and representatives of the local municipality.

... and St. Barnabas



For the second time since 1974, Greek Cypriots attended a liturgical service at St. Barnabas Church in the village of Engomi, Famagusta area, on 11 June, the feast day of the saint. Under tight security, the service started at about 7.50 a.m. and was attended by just over 600 clergy and civilians from the south. Bishop Vasilios, who officiated, said he was very moved to be back in the place where he started out as a young deacon over 30 years ago.

Some 200 cars, buses and trucks arrived for the ceremony. Authorities in the north, in close cooperation with the Civil Affairs team of Sector 4 and UNCIVPOL, worked together to organise and supervise the whole event. Checks made before entry to the church were carried out smoothly and efficiently, enabling the service to proceed without a hitch.

While the ceremony had special meaning for the worshippers, it was no less significant for the members of UNFICYP who attended. Once the service ended, candles were lit and icons kissed in traditional fashion.

Dep. Supt. K. Babu

According to local tradition, the first official introduction of Christianity to Cyprus started with the visit of Paul, Barnabas and John Mark on their first missionary journey in 45 AD.

Barnabas was a Salaminian and the trio's first port of call was Salamis where they preached at the local synagogues. They also went to Paphos where they converted Sergius Paulus, the Roman Governor of the island.

In 52 AD, after separating from Paul, Barnabas took his nephew John Mark and returned to Cyprus where he became the first Bishop of the Church of Cyprus. The Apostle died in Salamis, his native city, in 57 AD and was buried by John Mark.

The discovery in the fifth century AD of St. Barnabas' remains and a copy of St. Matthew's Gospel in Barnabas' own handwriting prompted Emperor Zeno to endorse the autonomy and independence of the Cyprus Church.

Following the discovery of St. Barnabas' remains, a church was constructed but was later destroyed between the 7th and 9th centuries. The present church is a later reconstruction. The traditional burial place of the Apostle is located about 100 metres east of the present church.

The story of the historic event is generally illustrated in iconographs in four, life-sized frescoes on the walls of the church.



"Los Magníficos" in their Flying Machines!



2i/c Capt. Adriano Ferrari



1/Lt Alfonso Naish in the Hughes 500D



1/Lt. Maximiliano Videla and WO II Jorge Martinez

At the southernmost end of the old Nicosia International Airport runway lies a hangar once used for housing aircraft of the island's only commercial airline company, Cyprus Airways. It is now home to a Bell 212 and a Hughes 500 D, the two helicopters manned by UN Flight, the unit responsible for providing helicopter air support to UNFICYP 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

When the Argentinian Air Force first took over from the British 16 Flight Army Air Corps in September 1994, it was equipped with two Hughes 500 D helicopters. However in July 1998, one of these was exchanged for a Bell 212 medium transport helicopter, which substantially enhanced the capabilities of the unit. Both helicopters are equipped with a hook for external underslung load transportation and a medevac/casevac configuration. Infra-red equipment is also available for day or night surveillance. One helicopter and crew is maintained on 30 minutes standby notice to move during duty hours, and at 45 minutes notice to move outside duty hours at all times in support of operations in the buffer zone and for casevacs.

In the hangar vicinity, associated buildings provide accommodation for the operations room, flight briefing area, administrative offices and technical support facilities. All UN Flight personnel are volunteers.

The operational flying crew is made up of eight pilots, headed by the Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. Osvaldo Albanesi, who is on his second tour with UNFICYP. On his first assignment in 2002-03, he held the post of Air Safety Officer.

The 2ic, Capt. Adriano Ferrari, is on his fifth tour with UNFICYP! Asked why he returns so often, Adriano says: "There is a shortage of pilots in Argentina, so it is not difficult to get to Cyprus – if you don't mind being away from home for months at a time. I am lucky – my wife is with me, and my first child will soon be born. Some are not so fortunate and leave wives and children behind. That is really difficult, but flying is a vocation for us – a way of life. So we make the sacrifice willingly, and our families support us."

Adriano adds: "We pilots do not only take on the responsibility of flying the helicopter. We all take on additional duties, for instance Personnel, Logistics, Operations, Transport, Training and Communications. Each of us has to deal with administrative/paperwork, so we have very little free time. I take care of the flying schedule, arrangements for demining activities, liaison with the north and south civil aviation authorities on flying restrictions near minefields, etc. I also run regular safety briefings."

His office is at one end of UN Flight's operations centre. At the other end is the general pilots' room where all the paperwork is done.

The room is named "Alejandro Sucarrat" after a pilot who served with Adriano on his first tour with UNFICYP in 1995 and who died of multiple sclerosis in 2002.

1/Lt. Maximiliano Videla has just returned for his second tour with UNFICYP. He recently served a six-month term in MINURSAH, Haiti. Also a pilot, Maximiliano has enjoyed serving in both missions, although, as he says, "there is an enormous difference between Haiti and Cyprus. In UNFICYP, our primary task is to patrol the buffer zone. In MINURSAH, we patrol the whole country. Here we are peacekeepers – in Haiti we were peacemakers, which meant we carried arms, both personally and on our helicopters. We saw a lot of poverty in Haiti – mothers and their children begging or searching for food in rubbish piles. On one occasion, we helped clear the streets when more than 4,000 people were killed by floods. Such scenes don't occur in Cyprus."

Also on his second tour is WO II Jorge Martinez, a specialist technician who will be serving for one year with UNFICYP. Jorge also recently completed a tour in MINURSAH. He explains that technicians not only maintain the helicopters on a daily basis, but also carry out regular maintenance inspections, some minor and some more detailed. For instance, the Hughes 500 D undergoes a main inspection after every 300 hours' flying time – the Bell 212's inspection is after 1,000 flying hours. During these inspections, the helicopter is taken to pieces and every part undergoes thorough scrutiny to check it is up to standard. And any free time the technicians may have is spent assisting the pilots with paperwork.

The air crews are augmented by two loadmasters and one commando. The loadmasters check the weight on helicopters including equipment, passengers, fire-fighting equipment, medical equipment, etc. They are also flight followers, monitoring take off and landing, checking wind velocity, etc. The commando is trained in air rescue operations, and is also a specialist in ground combat, parachuting and sharp shooting.

The ground support crew consists of a Maintenance Chief Engineer who supervises 13 technicians and three fuel specialists. The fuel specialists check the safety of the fuel truck, the fuel (e.g. for condensation), fire fighting equipment, etc.

Walking into the Ops Room, the first impression a visitor will get is one of calm and tranquility. Run completely by Argentinians, any one of the UN Flight members would typically welcome all visitors in a relaxed and friendly fashion. South Americans are known for their geniality and hospitality. However, make no mistake – these men are highly skilled and extremely professional. At the time of going to print, the unit has logged 12,100 successful flying hours, 33,232 transported passengers and 22,480 kg carried cargo. That's no mean feat!



OC UN Flt, Lt. Col. Osvaldo Albanesi



Pilots Capt. Pablo Guerrasio and 1/Lt. Maximiliano Videla



Load checking area

From Cape of Good Hope to Cape Greco – via Britain and Iraq!

Gerhard Grimett left South Africa for London in January 2002 in search of an adventurous experience before returning to his homeland to continue his education. What he did not expect was to find himself serving in the British Army in Iraq – and then peacekeeping in Cyprus as a member of the United Nations!

Working in a variety of casual jobs throughout 2002 and 2003, he became aware of the rules allowing commonwealth soldiers to serve in the British Army. He saw a friend join, and then decided to go to The Strand Recruiting Office and take the plunge himself! Recruit Grimett was trained by a 1 RHA officer and so elected to serve in 1 RHA.

After a period of intensive training starting in late 2003, Gnr. Grimett joined the Regiment in Iraq in August 2004 during a particularly dangerous period of the six-month tour. On return from Iraq, Gnr. Grimett deployed on exercise in England, serving on the AS90 155mm self-propelled howitzer which the Regiment is equipped with.

It was not long, however, before he found himself donning desert combats once again, this time for his role as a UN peacekeeper in Sector 2! Assigned to Centre Troop, he finds himself patrolling in and around the Old City, describing the experience as fascinating, challenging and very rewarding. He particularly enjoys



the chance to visit both the north and south of the island during his time off, and says it has been a privilege to experience the unique aspects of each culture.

When you consider that Gnr. Grimmatt came to Britain for adventure, he has certainly found it. He now has a host of experiences to take back to South Africa when he returns, for the first time since 2002, for a period of leave upon finishing his UN duties in Cyprus.

Sector 2 Regimental Sergeant Major



WO1(RSM) K.C. Cammack is the current Regimental Sergeant Major in Sector 2. As the senior soldier in the Regiment, he works alongside the Commanding Officer and is responsible for representing the interests of the soldiers in the Regiment – with a particular eye on discipline!

WO1(RSM) Cammack joined the Army in July 1983 and since then has served with 3 RHA, 7 Para RHA and now joins 1 RHA. Extremely well travelled, he has exercised in Belize, Kenya, USA, Mexico and Italy and has deployed on operations to Bosnia (in 1996) and Iraq (during the war in 2003). He has also served with UNFICYP twice in the past, including in 1994, when the Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. N. Marshall OBE RHA, was also last in Cyprus.

WO1(RSM) Cammack is also a keen sportsman who has gained colours for downhill skiing, skydiving, cross-country running, tug-of-war and, most recently, orienteering. He is enjoying his current tour with UNFICYP, and has been impressed by the immense progress in the operational situation in the period since 1994 to the present day.

“Back on the Hard Stuff”

Users of the Ledra Palace vehicle crossing facility, otherwise known as the “Kilmister Highway”, will (or should) note that the authorised vehicle crossing route has now reverted to the hard top road linking the two checkpoints.



Honourable Men, All



The MBE – Member of the Order of the British Empire – is an honour awarded to both military personnel and civilians for distinguished service to their country. It was created during the First World War in 1917, originally to recognise the valuable service of combatants and civilians towards the war effort.

Maj. Ian Middleton, currently MOLO to 9th Regiment National Guard, seen here with his wife Jane, was made MBE by the Prince of Wales on 8 June 2005.

The award recognises his substantial contribution to the restoration and improvement of provincial government departments in Southern Iraq from April to October last year.



Maj. Neil Wright, Military Assistant to the Force Commander, seen here with his wife Amanda, has recently received an MBE from the Queen at Buckingham Palace in recognition of his service in Iraq.

As the Officer Commanding A Company of the 1st Battalion The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, his mission was to train, equip, field and deploy a National Guard battalion of 1,000 Iraqi soldiers in six months. He and his soldiers – both Scottish and Iraqi – were operating under extremely dangerous conditions. However, over the course of six months, they enforced law and order, bringing increased security and stability to the area.

Maj. Wright finished his tour of Iraq in July 2004 and then assumed his current appointment in HQ UNFICYP.



WO1 (Conductor) Andrew Smith, Force Ordnance Warrant Officer, seen here with his wife Tracey, was recently awarded the MBE by the Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace in recognition of work carried out in Afghanistan and Iraq while serving with 3 Commando Brigade.

WO1 (Cdr) Smith served a four-month tour in Bagram, Afghanistan in 2002 and primarily assisted in setting up the logistic element of the deployment.

In 2003, he was posted to Iraq during the opening engagement and again was instrumental in setting up the logistic support for 3 Commando Brigade.

WO1 (Cdr) Smith is currently on a one-year posting with ISS in HQ UNFICYP.

Meanwhile, for his exceptional leadership and bravery during an action in Basra, Iraq, on 9 August 2004, **Sgt. Terry Bryan** was awarded the conspicuous **Gallantry Cross** (second only to the Victoria Cross in terms of bravery in the face of the enemy).

On the day in question, Sgt. Bryan's nine-man patrol was ambushed by an extremely large number of militia using rocket propelled grenades and small arms. The ensuing action lasted in excess of two hours, forced the patrol to abandon their vehicles and requisition a civilian house and was characterised by continuous attacks by a numerically far superior enemy. On the day, Sgt. Bryan's patrol was down to their final rounds of ammunition when help finally arrived, their relief having also suffered serious casualties and one fatality. Sgt. Bryan's leadership was assessed as being fundamental in ensuring that the patrol retained the will to win.

He received his medal from Her Majesty The Queen on 7 June 2005.



Visitors to UNFICYP



British High Commissioner Peter Millett inspecting guard of honour



EU Ambassador Blomberg with the Force Commander and Senior Adviser



Ambassador Hager meets the Austrian Contingent



Hungarian Foreign Minister Ferenc Somogyi with the Senior Adviser



German Ambassador Dr. Rolf Kaiser with the Chief of Mission



Slovak Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan visits Sector 4 troops



Irish parliamentary delegates with UNFICYP senior staff



Peacekeepers' day out

There were times recently when the numbers of visitors passing through mission Headquarters resembled an airport terminal in full summer flow.

Two Foreign Ministers

The Foreign Ministers of the Slovak Republic and Hungary arrived two weeks apart – **Mr. Eduard Kukan** in late June, and **Mr. Ferenc Somogyi** in early July. Chief of Mission Zbigniew Wlosowicz received the Slovak, while Force Commander Maj. Gen. Hebert Figoli welcomed the Hungarian Foreign Minister.

Among visiting ambassadors were those of Austria, **Dr. Eva Hager**, on 27 June, Germany, **Dr. Rolf Kaiser** on 18 July, and newly arrived British High Commissioner **Peter Millett** on 14 July. All were received with customary honour guard. Ambassador Hager and High Commissioner Millett subsequently toured the Green Line.

European Commission

Another VIP Green Line tour was laid on for the European Commission's Special Adviser for Cyprus, **Mr. Jaakko Blomberg**, when he visited the mission on 28 June. After being received by the Chief of Mission at Ledra Palace, Mr. Blomberg inspected stretches of the Green Line accompanied by the Force Commander and Senior Adviser Wlodek Cibor.

Irish Delegation

The European Union figured again when an Irish parliamentary delegation dealing with EU affairs, accompanied by Irish Ambassador to Cyprus John Swift, came to mission Headquarters to meet with senior staff on 6 July as part of a fact-finding visit to Cyprus.

Peacekeeping Colleagues

Colleagues from peace-keeping missions around the world gathered in Nicosia for a special senior management training course in late June. Nine missions were represented in all, including Kosovo (UNMIK), Tajikistan (UNTOP), Georgia (UNOMIG), Western Sahara (MINURSO), Congo (MONUC), Liberia (UNMIL), Cote d'Ivoire (ONUCI), plus Middle East (UNTSO), and, of course, Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Several members from the training group took advantage of an invitation by UNFICYP to take a short break to visit the UNPA. They can be seen in the photo (below) being briefed at the old Nicosia International Airport by MPIO Capt. Štefan Zemanovič.



You may have noticed something different about the UN Vehicle Fleet recently. Well, you'd be right! On 1 July, UNFICYP swapped its 57 old pick-ups for 57 brand new Chevrolets, fully equipped (carlog, Motorola, UN stickers and more) and ready to take on the patrol track.

What you might not know is what this rotation actually involved.

In the week leading up to change-over day, Tony, our auto-electrician, assisted by Niels, Lennart, Gary and Jerry, started removing carlog units from the old



pick-ups and re-installing them into the new vehicles (which had started to arrive on the unit) at a rate of about three per person per day.

It was estimated it would take about half an hour to complete each vehicle replacement. This procedure involved inspections, documentation, carlog calibration and changeover of number plates.

We also had to consider the fact that the 57 old pick-ups had to be de-rigged and returned to the contractor by midday on 1 July in their original state.

The other problems we faced were first, the fact that UN operations cannot be interrupted, second, the expected volume of traffic (over 100 vehicles) and, of course, the difficulty of working long hours in the sun.

This was a task that needed preparation and planning! The solution?

The night shift!

Comprising Jerry on the carlog, Cyril playing the trip tickets, Shane and Gary on vehicle inspections and Lennart on number plates and inspections, together with their manager Dave "Master Driver" Goodchild, the gig started at 9 pm. The group played on through the night until 10 am the next day.

The boys all looked a little punch-drunk by morning, but thanks to their hard work, the rotation went very smoothly without a hitch.

You didn't notice?

Then it must have been a successful operation!

Congratulations Transport!

Christine Iacovou

PIO House-Warming – Better Late than Never

Several months after moving back in, the Public Information Office unveiled its new look offices and resplendent elegance by hosting a come-one-come-all breakfast series for colleagues and staff at mission headquarters. Those unable to attend the big event because of work commitments were invited to attend a smaller gathering the following day.

PIO staff were happy to show off their new open plan, glass panelled offices and display the best of recent Force photography on their walls. Spokesperson



Brian Kelly paid tribute to Paul Kilmartin's Engineering Unit, especially Draughting Assistant Andreas Alexandrou; to the ITU and Communications team led by Roy Joblin, and to the stalwart crew from BMU. Their combined skills fully realized what had been blueprint theory at the beginning of the year. Words of thanks were also extended to CAO Frank Clancy for the "greenery", and to FC Figoli for the uniform support throughout the transition from old to new.

Catering was by PIO information and translation staff members, with a little welcome backup from the International Cafeteria. Ersin Oztoycan added to the occasion with a display of traditional Turkish dance.



Summer Sport Round-up

“Foottennis”



Footballtennis, aka Indian soccer, is a sport which originated in the early 1970s in the former Czechoslovakia. It was invented for all who know “how to kick a ball” and want to have a little active relaxation. The game is played in camps, schools, parks – just for fun. It has recently become so popular that World Championships are now organised on an annual basis.

As is clear from the name of the game and from the photo (left), a football is kicked over a tennis net! In this game, there are three variations: solo, pairs and trios. As in football, all parts of the body can be used apart from the arms and hands. As in tennis, a service takes place and the ball is then kicked back and forth across the net.

During the UNFICYP holiday on 20 June, a number of Slovaks living in the UNPA decided to spend their free time organising the first tournament of this kind. Six teams of three played against each other – four from the UNPA and two from Sector 4.

At the end of the day, Lt. Col. Bačko, CO Sector 4, awarded the winners with a diploma. The weather was glorious and all enjoyed the day immensely. Anyone wanting to find out more about the game should contact Maj. Kukuk, SO2 Coord, Ext: 4531.

Hockeyball

One thing can be said for sure about the Slovaks – whatever the weather, they are certainly into their sport! On 8 June, hockey was the name of the game.

The tournament took place on a concrete playground surrounded by wire fencing – which at times added to the game! Referee MSgt. Rastislav Ochotnický and CO Sector 4, Lt. Col. Martin Bačko, opened the first match of the day at 9.00 a.m. Watched with great interest by many members of Sector 4, six teams of all ranks lined up, ready to do their best and play like champions.

And play like champions they did. A relaxed and carefree atmosphere reigned throughout the whole contest, all the more heartwarming since the tournament was held in honour of Miroslav Hruška, the young Sector 4 member who died in 2004 in a helicopter accident at the age of 23.

First place was taken by “E-55” and second place went to the “Tatry Eagles”. No accidents, apart from one slightly sprained knee, were reported.



Swimming



All sectors participated in the annual summer swimming competition on 14 June, organised and run by the MFR at the Dolphin swimming pool in the UNPA. MFR soldiers also carry out the very worthy task of lifeguard duty at the popular pool.

Six teams took part in the competition. The individual medley – four lengths of the 50-metre pool using backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle – was won by Sector 4.

The overall team places were as follows:

First: MFR
Second: Sector 4
Third: Headquarters

Runners up in no particular order of finish were Sectors 1 and 2 and our non-amphibious Engineers!

Congratulations to the winning team members: Lt. Straughen, Lt. Vergara, Gnr. Slade-Jones, Gnr. Pollet, LBdr. Fry, Sen. Sgt. Kempes and Gnr. Wilson.



Civil Affairs facilitated the first ever exhibition football match between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot teams of the mixed village of Pyla on Sunday, 17 July. This was the first time the two sides had played since the teams separated along ethnic lines in 1968.

The event went off very well with some 100 in attendance. Refreshments followed. The Greek Cypriot side won with a 2-1 score

and trophies were presented to both teams by the Force Commander and the Australian High Commissioner, Mr. Garth Hunt.

The UN provided the referees whose impartial use of whistle and flag has won them a follow-up assignment when the next match is held in the Turkish Cypriot stadium in the autumn some time.

Civil Affairs also continues efforts to push for a mixed children’s team in the village.



As Australian High Commissioner Garth Hunt looks on, the Force Commander congratulates the team captains

When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Get Going

This year’s UNFICYP Cross Country and Family Run was organised by Sector 1 on 24 June. On a clear sunny morning, members of Sectors 1 and 2, the MFR, UN Flt and the HQ arrived for the event, which consisted of a family run of 5 km and a cross-country run of 15 km, all within the boundaries of the buffer zone. There were 21 entrants for cross-country, while 42 participated in the family run.

The path chosen for the run was for the most part Sector 1 patrol tracks, a difficult terrain which included climbs and long, sun-dried stretches, ending at Camp San Martín. To quench the runners’ thirst, water stations were set up en route.

Gnr. Steven Braiton (MFR) was the fastest runner for the 5 km run, with a total time of 18 minutes. SSgt. Oscar Sosa (Sector 1) was the first to cross the finish line for the cross-country with a total time of 1 hour, 3 minutes, 51 seconds. The only lady to participate was LCpl. Joanne

Burgess (MFR). In both events, medals were awarded to the first three places of each age category.

Sector 1’s ultimate purpose was to bring together UNFICYP personnel so they could get to know each other and promote comradeship. Also, of course, there the challenge of a good run on a demanding course.

