

The Blue Beret



15 Years of the Argentinean Air
Force in UN Flight UNFICYP

Contents



Editorial3

World,UN family mourn Haiti victims4

Intensive talks, Secretary-Generals visit mark beginning of year/
Good Offices website5

Profile: Senior Police Adviser John Farrelly6-7

15 Years of the Argentinean/
Air Force in UN Flight UNFICYP8-9

2009 Year in Review 10-11-12

Commitment and determination of leaders/
CMP continues efforts to bring closure 13

UNFICYP Military Skills 14-15

Keeping Austrian legacy alive 16

World AIDS Day 17

Santa comes to Pyla - Visits 18

New Faces 19

Serving UNFICYP's civilian, military and police personnel

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Editorial

The year began on a promising note in Cyprus as the two leaders committed themselves to engage in "intensive talks" aimed at reunifying the island. Their announcement generated considerable interest, with expectations running high about what the talks would yield. The two rounds of three-day discussions were held successfully in January at the newly refurbished Chief of Mission's residence in the UNPA. The talks got a further boost from a visit by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the end of the month (more on the trip in the next issue). What impact the intensified discussions ultimately have will be determined in the coming weeks, but the Secretary-General pointed to them as a sign of the commitment of the leaders.

Just as the talks resumed in 2010, however, the UN family in Cyprus learned with great shock and sadness of the catastrophic earthquake that struck Haiti on 11 January. The tremor is sure to rank among the worst natural disasters in modern history and as the most tragic single event for the United Nations. Hundreds of thousands of Haitians are reported to have perished, as well as dozens of our colleagues who had been trying to help the country achieve stability. The humanitarian situation remains dire; the reconstruction needs are enormous.

All of us in the United Nations and the international community have been deeply affected by this tragedy. The images of the devastation in Haiti are forever burned into our memories. We may be several thousand miles away from where the tragedy struck; we may not be able to fully grasp the pain and suffering endured; but we will always remember the sacrifice our fellow peacekeepers there made in the service of a people aspiring to peace, development and freedom.



Acting Special Representative for Haiti Pays Respects to Fallen UN Staff

On 28 January 2010 Edmond Mulet, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), lays flowers at a panel displaying the names of UN staff members who perished in Haiti's violent earthquake.

UN Photo/Marco Dormino

World, UN family mourn Haiti victims

The devastating 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti at 16:53 local time on 12 January left approximately 230,000 people dead and over 300,000 injured. More than 1.2 million are reported to be living in temporary camps. To date, 94 UN personnel have been confirmed dead, while seven remain unaccounted for.

The UN family in Cyprus and around the world has been greatly shaken by the tragedy. Many UN personnel lost not only colleagues, but also close friends made over many years working together in some of the most difficult spots on the globe.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in an opinion article titled "Haiti is not Alone", stressed that the disaster, "shows once again something that we, as human beings, have always known: that even amid the worst devastation, there is always hope." Referring to his visit to Port au Prince in the aftermath of the quake, the Secretary-General said, "The UN suffered its single greatest loss in history. Our headquarters in the Haitian capital was a mass of crushed concrete and tangled steel. How could anyone survive, I thought? Yet moments after I departed, with a heavy heart, rescue teams pulled out a survivor – alive, after five days, buried, without food or water. I think of it as a small miracle, a sign of hope."

"Disasters such as that in Haiti remind us of the fragility of life, but they also reaffirm our strength," he said. "We have seen an outpouring of international aid,

commensurate with the scale of this disaster. Every nation, every international aid organization in the world, has mobilized for Haiti's relief. Our job is to channel that assistance. We need to make sure our help gets to the people who need it, as fast as possible. We cannot have essential supplies sitting in warehouses. We have no time to lose, nor money to waste. This requires strong and effective coordination—the international community working together, as one, with the United Nations in the lead."

"This critical work began from the first day, both among UN and international aid agencies as well as among key players—the United Nations working closely with the United States and the countries of Europe, Latin America and many others to identify the most pressing humanitarian needs and deliver what is required.

"The urgency of the moment will naturally dominate our planning. But it is not too early to begin thinking about tomorrow; he said noting that although desperately poor, Haiti had been making progress. It was enjoying a new stability; investors had returned. It will not be enough to rebuild the country as it was, nor is there any place for cosmetic improvements. We must help Haiti build back better, working side by side with the government, so that the money and aid invested today will have lasting benefit, creating jobs and freeing it from dependence on the world's generosity."

Intensive talks, Secretary-General's visit mark beginning of year

Negotiations intensified in January 2010 with two rounds of full-day talks (11-13 and 25-27 January) with a view to reaching more convergence on governance and power sharing, the economy, EU matters and property. In the end, the sides concentrated on the question of governance and power-sharing, holding an additional full-day session on 29 January immediately before the arrival of the Secretary-General on the island. Following that meeting, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General, Alexander Downer, said the leaders had asked him to say on their behalf that "significant progress has been made in a series of areas of governance". The timetable for the next few months of talks had still not been set at the time of publication. The

process is expected, however, to be at least affected by the requirements of the election scheduled for 18 April – with a possible second round on 25 April – in the north. Speaking at a joint news conference with the Cyprus leaders on 1 February, the Secretary-General said he was encouraged "that the two leaders personally assured me of their shared commitment to a comprehensive solution as early as possible". "We will need even more courage and determination in the period ahead to bring these talks to a successful conclusion", he said. At the end of 2009 the leaders expressed their "strong hope that 2010 will be the year of solution of the Cyprus problem".



After the devastating earthquake



MINUSTAH Hospital Feeds Victims of Quake

A spontaneous hospital, established in the aftermath of Haiti's earthquake by the Jordanian Battalion of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), feeds children in need and provides medical treatment for earthquake victims.



Haitians in Léogâne Await Food Distribution

Inside Léogâne's stadium, now a camp where city residents have established temporary shelters, Haitians await a joint food distribution from the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED). The Sri Lankan Battalion of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) provides security at the stadium.



Staff Member Recovers Portraits from Haiti Mission Ruins

An engineer with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) removes portraits of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and MINUSTAH's leadership, left hanging on an office wall in the ruins of his Mission's headquarters in Port-au-Prince.

UN Photos/Sophia Paris

Good offices website

On 16 December 2009 the new website for the Good Offices mission of the Secretary-General in Cyprus was launched. This website – www.uncyprustalks.org – is a "one-stop shop" where you'll find the latest information on the Good Offices mission and how it facilitates the negotiations that aim to bring Cyprus together. The new website also features a Blog which aims to provide a more direct perspective and views on issues of interest



Profile: Senior Police Adviser John Farrelly



UNFICYP's Senior Police Adviser, Chief Superintendent John Farrelly is charged with managing 69 officers from ten different countries and ensuring that the UNPOL mandate in Cyprus is carried out.

He is also involved in overseeing the ongoing dialogue on crime and criminal matters between the two sides which includes the facilitation and chairing of a joint committee as well as the communications centre bringing together the police forces of both sides.

This is his second tour of duty with UNPOL in Cyprus. John served as Deputy Senior Police Adviser in 2008 – a year that saw significant change including the opening of Ledra Street and the resumption of peace talks between the two Cyprus leaders. He took up his current appointment as Senior Police Adviser in April 2009.

Farrelly says his work in Cyprus has been a unique experience and nothing like what he had done over a thirty year career in the Irish police. "When I first arrived I was the Deputy Chief of the UN police with officers from nine different countries with nine different skill bases and idiosyncrasies. On top of that there are eight police stations across the island; at the same time you are dealing with a highly sensitive political situation where anything could happen. The smallest issue could escalate into something huge."

Farrelly says his background and training in community policing made it easier to adjust and negotiate with people here. "Obviously you have to respect their views and stay totally impartial, which is essential for every police officer here." However he notes that even though he had positions in Ireland that called for tact and sensitivity, serving with UNFICYP has taught him "the ultimate in diplomacy." He admits that he has become more attuned to political sensitivities as well as issues relating to respect for diversity. He also has developed his communication skills.

With the resumption of negotiations and the decision by the leaders to set up technical committees and working groups, Farrelly was asked to chair and

facilitate the technical committee on crime and criminal matters. "This was where professionals from both sides were being brought together for the first time ever to try and work out improvements in crime prevention in the day to day life of everybody on the island," he explains. That technical committee has gone on from strength to strength and as a result they have created a joint communications room which is now housed in the UNDP offices in the United Nations Protected Area and staffed by representatives who are ex-police officers in some cases and serving police officers from both sides who communicate on a daily basis in relation to crime and criminal matters.

Farrelly points out that efforts are being made to secure a permanent building to house the joint communications room where the two sides work together on common projects on a daily basis. One long-term initiative undertaken calls for improvement of road safety on the island. The committee is also strengthening their cooperation in relation to crime. Criminals always try to take advantage of conflict situations. "That has changed and will continue to change," he said.

The technical committee has also organised a bicomunal event for the first time where experts in the field of child safety and protection had the opportunity to discuss ways of assisting young people who are vulnerable to crime right across the island.

Referring to the cooperation between the three main pillars of the mission, Farrelly says every operation mounted here security or otherwise touches on nearly every aspect of the mission and as a result military, police and civilians work well together and is an example for other missions that may not have the same degree of cohesion.

Difficulties that may arise in the day to day work of UNPOL in the buffer zone relate to

language barriers. However, generally speaking, communication is good and rarely have there been issues of aggression. "This is due largely to the way we approach people and the way we do our business. We instil in our police officers that when they come here it is important to respect diversity, respect each other within the mission and certainly to respect the community that we live and work in."

Farrelly says another challenge is to keep up with the momentum of events in Cyprus where the last two years have seen a lot of action in relation to peace talks. This is very welcome, he says, but also increases the number of activities in the UN in addition to routine duties.

Farrelly stresses that UNPOL is a civilian police force. It is not a substitute police force as it does not administer the law or have powers of arrest or

detention and as a result works with the Cyprus police when issues arise in the buffer zone. "Where we detect a criminal matter we gather the evidence and hand over to the Cypriot police and we will act as witnesses for them."

Referring to the gender balance within UNPOL, Farrelly says the number has improved, there are 16 female officers, but still has a way to go before they reach the 25-30% of the force they aim for.

Farrelly is a member of *An Garda Siochana* (Ireland's Police Service) at the rank of Chief Superintendent and has been in the force since 1976. Some of the key positions he held during his service included being spokesman and press and public relations officer for twelve years before heading up the Road Safety and Traffic Department.

Farrelly says: "I always had a thing for the public eye even though I was a police officer. I was told that there was an opening in the Press and Public Relations Department as the Assistant Spokesperson for the organisation, and I made it known that I would be interested. I was promoted to the position but little did I know that nobody else was interested in it because apparently people didn't like that type of thing. But I loved it."

His gregarious extrovert nature has stood him in good stead when it comes to trying to facilitate discussions between the authorities on both sides on crime and criminal matters.

He is the holder of two awards for bravery, one being awarded by the Government of Ireland for saving the life of a man who had fallen down a cliff face.

Farrelly is a member of the Public Relations Institute of Ireland. He holds a diploma in Public Relations, is a member of the International Institute of Security, and has a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Hons) in Police Management.

"I love Cyprus, I love the people, I love the job and



the people I work with," Farrelly says. "The down side about it is the time goes so fast that you could get old very quick here and not know it." He does, however, miss home and particularly his mother Rosaleen. He also has two daughters - Stephanie and Michelle aged, 27 and 24 respectively and is engaged to Luma.

By Netha Kreouzos



Technical Committee on Crime hosts joint seminar

The Technical Committee on Crime and Criminal Matters, held a bi-communal seminar on 13 January at Ledra palace Hotel to begin work on an island-wide project to help children at risk. This was the first meeting of the law enforcement community to enjoy formal participation from both sides. The Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Cyprus, Alexander Downer (pictured), opened the seminar.

15 Years of the Argentinean Air Force in UN Flight UNFICYP

On 15 September 1994 at 4:00pm, a Hercules C-130 (LV-APW) arrived at Larnaca Airport from Argentina. It carried a very special cargo: two Hughes MD500 helicopters and their commanders, together with a helicopter group made up of six officers and 10 non-commissioned officers.

This was the first Argentinean Air Force group to take over UN Flight from the outgoing British AAC Flight.

Fifteen years later, 17,650 flight hours have been logged and 43,500 passengers and 40,500 kilos of cargo transported by the helicopters in UN Flight.

UN Flight has three helicopters, with two in operation at all times. The unit is based at UNFICYP headquarters and staffed by 28 personnel from the Argentinean contingent. Using Hughes 500 and a Bell 212 helicopters, the unit conducts patrols along the buffer zone and provides logistical support for UNFICYP operations and emergency assistance, such as medical evacuations, as required.

The Argentinean UN Flight peacekeepers regularly demonstrate the skill and flexibility acquired from working back home in wide-ranging and difficult terrain, including Antarctica and the Patagonia region.

"Operations" is the nerve centre of UN Flight, where all flight activities are planned and coordinated for the helicopter crews.

Support is given by the Technical and Logistic Maintenance section which ensures the aircraft are correctly maintained and in permanent operational condition, conducting daily checks and minor and major inspections.

In addition there are the administrative areas of personnel, training, press, statistics, meteorology, safety,

communications, transport the provision of fuels and lubricants for the helicopters, and flight monitoring.

In September 2003, the Unit reached the milestone of 10,000 flying hours and was presented with "the Force Commander's Certificate of Professional Excellence".

On occasion UN Flight has been called to offer assistance to the local communities in emergency situations, like the major fires that raged across the mountain range of Troodos in June 2007 destroying 11.8 square kilometres of forest. At that time UN Flight received a request from Cyprus Police to fly over the fire zone to assess the course of the blaze and determine the best strategy for extinguishing the flames.

UN Flight flew the Deputy Police Chief to the fire zone and reached a height of 2,300 metres, which is much higher than the normal air patrol. Flying above the fire, radio coordinates were used in conjunction with other aircraft in the area and patterns of observation were conducted in order to identify possible access routes to battle the flames, thereby assisting the fire-fighters on the ground to control the spread of the devastating fires.

In July 2006 UN Flight was charged with transporting Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon to Beirut after he attended a crisis conference in Rome on the hostilities that had broken out in his country. As the airport in Beirut was not operational UNFICYP was asked to assist in transporting the Prime Minister back to his country.

More recently UN Flight has flown the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General, Alexander Downer and the representatives of the two Cyprus leaders -- George Iacovou and Ozdil Nami -- over the buffer zone and the various sectors of UNFICYP.



2009 - Year in Review

The year saw the political talks on a solution to the Cyprus problem cover much ground, with Cyprus leaders Demetris Christofias and Mehmet Ali Talat meeting almost 60 times in the United Nations protected area. Confidence-building measures included the announcement of the opening of the Limnitis/ Yeşilirmak crossing and a historic trip by ambulance from Kato Pyrgos medical centre to Nicosia through that road for the first time since 1964. The following is a month-by-month account of the year's highlights for the United Nations in Cyprus:

January

5 January -- The two leaders resumed their talks, which had kicked off formally four months earlier.

9 January -- Hundreds of Greek and Turkish Cypriot schoolchildren held torches along the medieval Venetian walls of Nicosia to form a "Circle of Love" around the divided capital. The event, initiated by the wives of the two Cyprus leaders and facilitated by UNFICYP, raised money for disabled children and

visiting the Anthropological Laboratory of the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP) in the United Nations Protected Area on. During his visit Talat donated \$50 000 towards the work of the CMP.

4 February -- The Special Representative opened the third UNFICYP bi-communal art exhibition on, lauding the work of Cypriot photographers Voula Tsangarides and Veli Kaymaklıli. Zerihoun said the photographs on display in UNFICYP headquarters were inspiring" and reiterated the mission's commitment to promote the works of up and coming artists from the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities.

13 February -- In his address to the UNFICYP Winter Medal Parade, the Special Representative referred to the Cyprus peace talks and said, "It took vision, political courage and commitment on the part of the two leaders to finally sit down and start charting a path leading to a future reunited and peaceful Cyprus." He noted that prospects of success for this reinvigorated peace process are as good as ever..."

and constructive approach by all parties. The Council also emphasizes the importance of all parties engaging "fully, flexibly and constructively" while looking forward to decisive progress in the negotiations in the near future.

27 April – 1 May -- UNFICYP held its first HIV/AIDS Peer Education Training Workshop with the support of the UNIFIL HIV/AIDS Unit. Fifteen participants drawn from the national and international staff, UNPOL and military personnel completed the course.

May

5 May -- The Leaders assess the work done so far and decide to intensify their efforts.

14-17 May -- Forty leaders and representatives of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political parties gathered in Bratislava, Slovakia to mark the 20th anniversary of their peace dialogue. The meeting aimed at encouraging and giving impetus to the peace process as well as give international recognition and pay tribute

up around buildings in the camp and the planting of 50 trees.

10 June -- In his address to the Summer Medal Parade, Chief of Mission Tayé-Brook Zerihoun reiterated the United Nations view that "the solution to the Cyprus problem, has to and will, come from the Cypriots themselves." He said the organisation will continue to support Cyprus.

"Cypriots will continue to see a concrete manifestation of international support in the work that our peacekeepers who strive to ensure that the stability and calm remain the norm in the buffer zone and that day-to-day life for all Cypriots is as normal as possible," he said

26 June -- The new crossing between north and south at Yeşilirmak /Limnitis agreed by the leaders of the two communities after months of discussions gave a welcome boost to the peace process. UNFICYP's engineers immediately set to work to enable the transit of emergency vehicles in the area.



brought together the younger generations of Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNFICYP Chief of Mission, Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, helped open the fourth annual session of the Mediterranean Model United Nations in January, commending young participants for their interest in tackling complex world issues.

28 January -- The leaders agreed to establish an Advisory Board for the Preservation, Physical Protection and Restoration of Immovable Cultural Heritage of Cyprus proposed by the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage. The Advisory Board will provide a mutually acceptable mechanism for the implementation of practical measures for the proper maintenance, preservation, physical protection and restoration of immovable cultural heritage of Cyprus.

February

23 February -- The problem of the missing is a humanitarian issue and not a political one to be exploited, Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat said after

March

The Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage visited Droshias High School in Larnaca as part of the group's awareness-raising programme involving schools in both communities. The event, titled "Culture, a Bridge for Reconciliation of Peoples," introduced students and teachers to their work, stressing the importance of Cyprus's cultural heritage, not only for the island's future generations, but also for Europe and the world.

April

Late April -- The Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Alexander Downer, briefed the Security Council on the developments in the negotiations, welcoming the good and steady progress achieved by the parties. The Security Council subsequently issues a Presidential statement on 30 April reiterating its full support for the process and commending the leaders for the political leadership and the progress made so far as well as the leaders' joint statements. The Security Council strongly urges the leaders to increase the momentum in the negotiations, emphasizing the importance of a flexible



to the leaders of the political parties for their dedication, strong will and endurance in overcoming many differences and difficulties through dialogue, said Slovak Ambassador to Cyprus Anna Turenicova.

29 May -- The Security Council adopts resolution 1873 (2009) extending the mandate of UNFICYP and welcoming the progress made so far in the fully fledged negotiations, and the prospect of further progress in the near future towards a comprehensive and durable settlement that this has created. The resolution also urges full exploitation of this opportunity, including by intensifying the momentum of negotiations, improving the current atmosphere of trust and goodwill, and engaging in the process in a constructive and open manner.

June

5 June -- UNFICYP civilian, military and police personnel marked World Environment Day with a number of activities including turning Blue beret camp into a pedestrian and cyclist zone for the day, a clean

July

An ambulance travelled from Kato Pyrgos medical centre in the Paphos district to Nicosia General Hospital for the first time since 1964. The vehicle made the historic journey covering the distance by passing through Limnitis then onto the villages of Xeros, Potamos and Morphou, before finally arriving at Nicosia General Hospital. The purpose of the journey was a "dry run" to determine if the narrow road, which was constructed in colonial times was fit for vehicles before the opening of the new crossing point.

17 July -- 40 members of UNFICYP police and military components were involved in the organisation of a pilgrimage involving two convoys of 926 people to Ayia Marina church in the buffer zone area of Dherynia.

August

August Conclusion of the first reading of the six chapters of the negotiations: governance and power sharing; European Union matters; security and guarantees; territory; property; and economic matters.

From September 2008 to August 2009 the leaders have met 40 times.

The United Nations Development Programme's Partnership for the Future Programme under the EU-funded "Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot Community", awarded a contract to a joint venture between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot engineering companies to provide services for the Survey, Investigation, Assessment and Project Designs for the improvement of the Kato Pyrgos /Asagi Pirgo - Limnitis /Yeşilirmak Road." The project involves the upgrading of the road, a section of 2.2km located in the buffer zone and another section of about 4.5km located in the northern part of the island.

September

10 September -- The leaders start the second round of their full-fledged negotiations.

28 September -- UNFICYP observed International Day of Peace with a candle vigil ceremony held in the buffer zone area outside Ledra Palace Hotel. Force Commander Rear Admiral Mario Sanchez Debernardi addressed the event, which was attended by Greek and Turkish Cypriot members of the World War II Veterans association, members of the diplomatic community and representatives of the two main communities on the island.

calling for peace in Cyprus, "free of barbed wires where all children can live happily and safely."

25 October -- The wives of the Cyprus leaders, Elsi Christofias and Oya Talat, stressed that rapprochement between the island's two communities is an essential ingredient of efforts to find a just and viable solution to the Cyprus problem. The two women reiterated this message at a bicomunal concert held in the main square of the buffer zone village of Pyla where Greek and Turkish Cypriots live together.

28 October -- A member of the Mine Action Centre Cyprus (MACC) was killed in a demining accident, the group's first fatality in five years of work on the island. Femisberto Novele, a MACC member from Mozambique, died in an explosion at a minefield near Geri, some 10 kilometres south east of Nicosia.

November

17 November -- The two Cyprus leaders Demetris Christofias and Mehmet Ali Talat showed their support for the work of the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus by attending an event at Ledra Palace in recognition of the €2 million contribution made by the European Union. Both leaders pledged their continued support for the work of the CMP and stressed that the issue of the missing is a humanitarian one and their



8-11 September -- Two members of The Elders group, Gro Brundtland and Lakhdar Brahimi, visited Ankara, Athens and Cyprus where they met with the political leadership of Greece and Turkey and the Cyprus leaders Demetris Christofias and Mehmet Ali Talat. Following their visit the Elders said they are "... encouraged and truly inspired by these two courageous leaders who are trying to reunify Cyprus through a fair deal."

October

15 October -- In a symbolic gesture of peace and unity Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders planted two olive trees at the entrance to the site where they are engaged in talks aimed at unifying the island. The leaders also received a petition from civil society representatives from both communities conveying a message of hope and solidarity for the negotiations process and a united Cyprus.

24 October -- UNFICYP peacekeepers visited children at the Tembria Nursery school as part of efforts to raise awareness of UNFICYP's work on UN Day. The children prepared a petition with the help of their teacher

approach to it is to heal the grievances of the families. 27 November -- Sergeant Antonio David Ojeda was killed on in a traffic accident near Kokkinotri Mithia in Nicosia.

December

9 December -- The Secretary-General's Special Adviser and the UNFICYP Chief of Mission present progress reports to the Security Council briefing it on latest developments in the peace process.

14 December -- The Security Council adopts resolution 1898 extending the mandate of UNFICYP for six months and urging the parties in Cyprus to build on previous progress in negotiations for the reunification of the divided island.

By the end of December 2009 the two leaders had met 59 times.

By Netha Kreouzou



Commitment and determination of leaders praised

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Cyprus and Chief of Mission Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, lauded the commitment shown by the two Cyprus leaders in the negotiations process for a solution to the Cyprus problem

Addressing the Fifth Annual Session of the Mediterranean Model United Nations (MEDIMUN) on 15 January 2010, Zerihoun said: "The two leaders have shown great commitment and determination to the peace effort despite considerable challenges and criticism of the process. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has commended the leaders on several occasions for their effort and for the progress achieved so far."

He pointed out that in all negotiations, if the process is to be successful the two sides must demonstrate flexibility and accommodate each other's concerns to the extent possible. "The broad outlines of a solution have already been articulated by the two sides: A bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality on the basis of relevant decisions and resolutions of the Security Council. Both sides understand what is at stake, and have asserted that the status quo is unacceptable. It is generally acknowledged that the benefits of a solution for both sides would be many, while the cost of failure could be high," he said.

The Special representative of the Secretary-General noted that the sides have taken responsibility for and ownership of the peace process. "The negotiations are Cypriot-led; we at the United Nations play the role of

facilitators, providing assistance and support at their request. Cypriot ownership of the process is a fundamentally important feature of the current peace talks and the guarantee for a sustainable solution. That is a lesson the United Nations has drawn from its own history. We can only be effective in what we do if we have the consent of the parties we seek to help, including in the implementation of an agreement accepted by the two communities," he said.

Referring to the workings of the conference, Zerihoun encouraged the participants to debate in a spirit of tolerance for diversity and different points of view. "Your Model UN is built on open minds and fresh ideas. He pointed out that this open-mindedness is the essence of successful diplomacy...the ability to understand and analyze all positions, including those you oppose. What better place to echo the commitments made at the founding of the United Nations more than over 60 years ago to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours than Cyprus, a crossroads of different cultures."

Zerihoun stressed that programmes like Model United Nations are unique in providing insight into the United Nations, its work in addressing critical global challenges and being the global face. "Your voice, activity and energy can help highlight the successes and explain the constraints of the United Nations. You can be catalysts for change by creating social networks to support the UN's work. The world needs bold and compassionate young leaders. Your creativity, energy, and intellect are essential for tackling the global challenges of today and tomorrow," he said.

CMP continues efforts to bring closure

The Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus (CMP) announced that it will intensify its work in 2010 with eight exhumation teams - six in the northern and two in the southern part of Cyprus.

Since the start of its exhumation project in August 2006, the CMP has retrieved skeletal elements which relate to more than 600 persons and identified and returned to their families the remains of 196 missing persons (145 missing Greek Cypriots and 51 missing Turkish Cypriots). The exhumation and identification work of the CMP is guided by scrupulous scientific process and precise rules and is based on internationally accepted standards and practices. Valuable advice is given by the Argentinean experts of EAAF and the ICRC.

The investigations of the CMP are conducted in the sole interest of the families whose loved ones are missing and whose pain and sensitivities must be respected by all. Its mandate is purely humanitarian: to establish the fate of missing persons. The Committee does not attempt to establish the cause of death or attribute responsibility for the death of missing persons.

To succeed in its mission CMP needs the help of all concerned and especially those who possess relevant

information or are in a position to secure it. The CMP appeals to anyone who has any information on possible burial sites to come forward. The CMP guarantees strict confidentiality of the information and absolute protection of identity. The CMP would like to thank those who have provided information so far.



Currently the families of over 1800 missing Cypriots from both communities are still waiting to learn the fate of their loved ones. Their pain is pain of all Cypriots, their tragedy is the tragedy of the entire island of Cyprus, and all involved must join together to heal the wounds of the past, to do everything possible

to bring closure to the families of the missing persons.

The CMP would like to thank all donor countries and especially the European Union and express the hope that this support will continue in the future so that, together with the contributions originating from Cyprus, the work will continue without interruptions or delays.

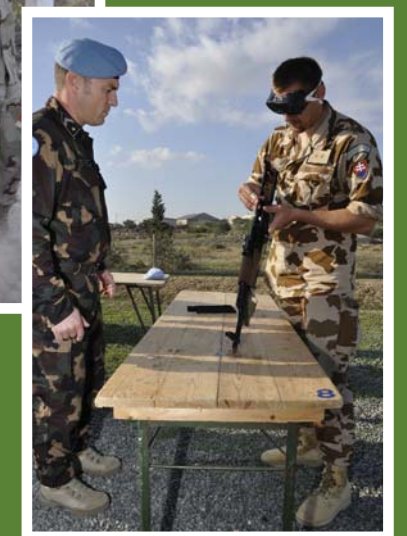
Additional information on the CMP can be found here - <http://www.cmp-cyprus.org>



UNFICYP Military Skills

The Military Skills Competition took place on 25 November 2009 in the UNPA and was eagerly awaited by all sectors. Last summer's winners were Sector 4 who had their eyes on winning the competition again. Sector 1 who had come a close second in the summer trained hard, leaving no stone unturned in their preparation to win the trophy back. The Competition started in pitch darkness and you could feel the anticipation in the air as all the sectors lined up at the start of the first stand, "The Endurance". This stand ended up being the most competitive as all the teams were looking to get off to a good start. As the start flag dropped a sea of combats pushed forward fueled by pure adrenaline into the darkness as a crowd of cheers and screams could be heard in the distance.

After a grueling day of testing the team's skills in a number of disciplines including map reading, incident reaction and an assault course, the team points were tallied and the winners announced. The results were: Sector 2 (A team) in third place, Sector 1 (A team) in second place and in first place the MFR team. This was the first time since the summer of 2006 that the trophy would be going to the MFR. "The feeling of joy and triumph ran through each one of us. We had all been proud of being a part of the MFR team, however this moment rightly made every day of training worth it and showed in the dominant manner we won, that team spirit and team work will always run out winners."



Keeping Austrian legacy alive



LtCol. Theissel



WO. Zeller



Mjr. klimmer

The Austrians are one of the longest serving contingents in UNFICYP and have been with the mission since its inception over 45 years ago.

With the adoption on Security Council Resolution 186, Austrian peacekeepers became part of the first international peacekeeping troops to arrive in Cyprus on 4 March 1964.

At the time Austria installed a field hospital at the Kokkinotrimithia area near Nicosia for about 6000 UN troops stationed all over the island. Austria also deployed 31 civilian police to various detachments across Cyprus.

In 1972 Austria was asked to take over responsibility from the Irish military contingent in the Paphos district where major incidents of intercommunal violence between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities was recorded.

In December 1973 the Austrian contingent was transferred to the Larnaca District and shortly before that the Field Hospital was reduced in size to an ambulance detachment. The situation in Cyprus at this time was relatively quiet until July 1974 when Turkey launched an extensive military operation in Cyprus following a coup d'état against the Cyprus Government by National Guard officers under the direction of Greek officers.

During this period 3 Austrian Peacekeepers were killed in a tragic attack by a Turkish fighter jet which dropped a napalm bomb on them on 14 August 1974.

Once the hostilities ceased the Austrians were involved in assisting in the transfer of Turkish Cypriot civilians to the northern part of the island and Greek Cypriots to the south.

In 1976 AUSCON was moved from Larnaca to Famagusta where they remained for over twenty years. The bulk of the Austrian Contingent left the island in 2001 due to Austria's increasing commitments in missions like Bosnia and Chad. From 2001 only a staff officer element in HQ UNFICYP in Nicosia remained with a strength of seven officers and

non-commissioned officers. In 2004 the number of Austrian Peacekeepers decreased again to two officers and two non-commissioned officers which remains the current strength of the contingent.

The contingent today consists of LtCol Bernhard Theissel who took over the appointment of Liaison Officer to the National Guard on 24 August 2008. Theissel first served with UNFICYP from January - August 1974 deployed in the Larnaca District in a number of positions. In 1978, 1979 and 1980 he served with the UNFICYP Military Police. In 1999 and 2001 he was a member of the UNFICYP Civil Affairs Branch. He has also served in other missions including Syria, Israel, Albania, Bosnia and Kosovo.

Maj Harald. Klimmer took over the appointment of Civil Affairs Military Liaison Officer on the 26 March 2009. This is his first mission with the UN. In 2006 he served as J8 in the European Staff Group Operation Headquarters EUFOR ALTHEA at SHAPE in Mons/ Belgium.

WO 1 Guido Abl started his tour with UNFICYP on 23rd April 2008. In 1987/88 he served in Athienou as the Position Commander. During his second tour with UNFICYP in 1992/93 WO1 Abl held the position of Welfare NCO in Camp Duke Leopold V in Famagusta. From 1996 to 1998 he was the Resupply Clerk in the Civil Affairs Branch and from 2002 to 2004 WO1 Abl worked in HQ Ops Branch as General Clerk.

WO1 Reinhardt Zeller is a regularly returning member of UNFICYP whose first tour started with the then Austrian led Sector 4 in 1988. He has since deployed on numerous tours in a variety of posts. With the Austrian Battalion he served as a member of the HQ staff in the Civil Affairs Branch in 2002. He has also held the post of the Force Database Manager from 2006- 2008 and was redeployed to the same post from 19 August 2009.



Austrian Field Hospital



Patrolling Larnaca 1975

World AIDS Day



UNFICYP's third annual World AIDS Day event was held on 1 December with the distribution of t-shirts, caps, condoms and AIDS ribbon pins as staff arrived for work. Staff showed their support by donating generously with their loose change and cash in donation boxes and by wearing their T-shirts and caps and pins throughout the day.

A mandatory HIV briefing was held in line with the theme of this year's campaign -- "Universal Access and Human Rights" -- where the Secretary-General's message was also read out, followed by a brief question-and-answer session.

A sponsored Karaoke competition followed which included performances by the Force Commander, the Senior Police Adviser and a number of civilian staff. The 12 songs performed received enthusiastic applause and were well- sponsored by the audience.

The winners of the competition were:
First place - Senior Police Adviser John Farrelly with his rendition of "Sweet Caroline"

Second place (tied) - Peacekeeping Diva (Renalyn Naturel) with "You Light Up My Life - True Survivor (Ersin Oztoycan) with "I Will Survive" Third place - Force Commander, Rear Admiral Mario Sanchez Debernardi, with "Besame Mucho"

UNFICYP's first peer educators played a major role in this year's activities and the day's events served as an opportunity for staff to work as a team, show solidarity for each other and at the same time "deliver as one" in raising awareness on HIV. Approximately €1000 was raised from donations made by staff. The money will be given to Cypriot charities that support people living with HIV/AIDS on the island.



World AIDS day also provided an opportunity for everyone based at the Ledra Palace Hotel to have fun while raising money for local HIV/AIDS charities. A number of gymnasium-based competitions were organized. Pictured are members of East Troop with L/Cpl Fiakegbe (PTI) enjoying the 2000 metre Rowing Challenge.



Santa comes to Pyla



Santa Claus descended on the mixed village of Pyla in the buffer zone on a UN helicopter on 18 December, bearing gifts and treats for the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot school children there. Santa Claus, a.k.a. Deputy Senior Police Advisor, Phil Spence, was welcomed by crowds of school children and their families who patiently waited for his impressive arrival on a UN helicopter. Force Commander - Rear Admiral Mario Sánchez Debernardi and his wife Mariela Loyola were also on hand to greet their special guest in Pyla.

While waiting for the arrival of Santa the children were treated to fruit and biscuits. In total Santa handed out 200 electronic keyboards, 200 bags of sweets and 50 gifts for children under the age of 3. The event which has been held for the last four years was organised by the UNFICYP Civil Affairs Branch with the cooperation of UNPOL, the military components and the staff of the international cafeteria. The latter once again donated fruit and some 500 cookies they baked for the occasion.



Visits



Hungarian Ministry of Defence Delegation visits Cyprus

A high-ranking delegation from the Hungarian Ministry of Defence visited Cyprus between 11 and 13 December 2009. The delegation was led by Dr. Károly Füredi, State Secretary for Defence Planning and Infrastructure, and Dr. Péter József, State Secretary for Law of the Ministry of Defence. The Force Commander briefed the delegation on the current situation on the island. This was followed by meetings with the Commanding Officer and Deputy Commanding Officer of Sector 4, where the Hungarian contingent is based.



Slovak Minister of Defence visit

Slovak Minister of Defence Jaroslav BAŠKA visited UNFICYP on 7 December 2009. He was accompanied by Chief of General Staff Gen Ľubomír BULÍK, Major Gen Ján SALAGANIČ and members of the Committee for Defense and Security. The visitors inspected an honour guard on arrival at UNFICYP before meeting with the Force Commander and Chief of Staff Colonel Gerrard Hughes. This was followed by meetings with their contingent serving in Cyprus.

New Faces

Administrative Clerk



Christina Efthymiou, a Cypriot-born Londoner, joined UNFICYP in September as an Administrative Clerk (Accommodation Officer) in the Engineering Unit. She was born in Famagusta but at a very young age moved with her family to London where she grew. She studied UK housing law, which included finance, property surveying and architecture, before entering the civil service in the UK as a

finance officer. She then moved on to become a homeless persons housing officer, a position she held for almost 20 years before returning to Cyprus in 2006. Christina has a 26-year-old son, Roberto who lives in the UK. She loves the sea and walking along the coast of Protaras, where she has her home. She enjoys swimming, yoga, reading and listening to music.

Shipping Clerk



Fanourios Andreou joined UNFICYP in January, taking up the post of Shipping Clerk in the General Services Section. Fanourios, who is better known as Fanos is well known to UNFICYP personnel as he worked as a chef in the International Cafeteria for the last ten years. Fanos studied culinary arts at the Cyprus Hotel Institute graduating in 1997, after which he worked for a brief period in local companies in the area of

sales. Fanos says he is happy and excited at the new prospects of his position and feels he is in a comfortable and familiar environment with people he has known for years. He also will not lose touch with his colleagues in the kitchens. Fanos is married to Maria and they have two children, a daughter Pavlina, 9 years old and a son, Constantinos, 2 years old. He enjoys football, dancing and travelling.

CO UN Flight



Vicecomodoro (Lt. Col) Daniel Martin Russo arrived in UNFICYP on 9 January to take up the post of CO UN Flight. He joined the Argentinean Air Force (AAF) in 1982 and has acquired over 5500 flying hours. He has completed several special tasks in the AAF and the Presidential Air Group. Russo has a degree in Aerial and Aerospace Systems, and has served in a number of appointments, including the VIIth Air Brigade, as a pilot, instructor and flight inspector, Comando de Material (Logistic Superior

Command) in Plans Dept.: Secretary General of Air Force Chief of Staff, as Chief of Protocol and in the Presidential Air Group as Chief of Helicopters Operations Lt. Col. Russo was a member of the First Argentinian UN Flight to serve in UNFICYP in 1994 and returned on a second tour of duty in 1996. In 2008 he served in MINUSTAH as Commander of the Argentinean Aviation Units. In his free time, he likes to play racketball, swim and read. He is married to Claudia.

Health, Safety and Environmental Assistant



Themistoklis Anthrakopoulos the Health, Safety and Environmental Assistant joined UNFICYP back in April 2009. He was born in Sydney Australia on June 1972 to Greek parents and attended school in Greece from 1978 to 1990. He fulfilled his national service as a sergeant paratrooper and then worked in a number of industries gaining extensive experience that is useful in his latest appointment. In early 1995 Themis

returned to Australia. After becoming passenger train driver he advanced to the rank of Operations Standards Manager training and assessing train drivers and train guards. He also produced investigation reports on incidents. He became a Senior Operations Standards Manager before he resigned and migrated to Cyprus where he married Kalliopi Nikolaou. They have a 13 month old baby boy.

Single greatest loss in UN history

