

GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



April - June 2007
No. 111



Dear Reader !

First of all let me welcome our newly arrived Press Officers: Capt Uwe Sandrieser (AUS-BATT), LtI Marek Uchal (SLOVCON), Capt Abhimanyu Varma (INDCON). As always, a big round of applause for all Press Officers and great articles. People have changed within the editorial team of the journal. Our Editor & DMPIO Capt Eiichiro Shinoda and our Senior Proofreader E. Lynn Elvaiah, being our only civilian, stayed the same. Unfortunately for us, she is looking forward to retire soon. In this case we have also to say Good-Bye to E. Lynn Elvaiah. Thanks a million for all your hard work and great support. We'll miss you! Maj Stefan Eder

the new Senior Editor and SSOMPR & Welfare, WOII Arnold 'Arni' Felfer the new Force Photographer, Managing Editor and Layout Designer and myself Capt Hermann Altmanninger as Editor, Proofreader and SOPR newly joined the team. Stefan (47), born and raised in Salzburg has great experience in the mission area. He was starting his tour of duty at the 16th Apr 2007. 'Arni', 40 years, born and raised in Styria, has also great experience in UN missions, now starting his 3rd tour of duty. He also has great experience as photographer. For me (41), born and raised in Upper Austria, this is my first tour of duty within UNDOF. I'm



*This Edition's Editorial Team
Arnold, Ichiro, Stefan, Hermann*

looking forward to this challenging assignment. Thanks to everyone in advance for all your support to us and the Golan Journal!

*Yours sincerely,
Capt Hermann Altmanninger, SOPR*

SOPR	Editorial	2
FC UNDOF	Force Commander's Message	3
COS UNDOF	COS Words	4
DMPIO	Visitors to UNDOF	5
New People	New People in UNDOF	6
OGG	New UNMOS to Observer	7
Diplomats	Ambassador and Attachés	8
Diplomats	Ambassador and Attachés	9
AUSBATT	Marching Challenge	10
AUSBATT	Medal Parade	11
SG	Ban Ki-moon visits UNDOF	12
SG	Ban Ki-moon visits UNDOF	13
INDCON	FC inspection of LOGBATT	14
INDCON	FC inspection of LOGBATT	15
POLBATT	Volleyball	16
POLBATT	White Sunday	17
SLOVCON	New faces SLOVCON	18
SLOVCON	New faces SLOVCON	19
J-CON	Welcome CLUB FUJI	20
Training	Heavy Duty at Golan Heights	21
Farewell	Good-By by E. Lynn Elvaiah	22
Engineering	The New Medical Center Camp Faouar - Part 4	23
Front (Page 1):	UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon visit UNDOF <i>Photo by WOII Gernot Payer</i>	
Back (Page 24):	Waterfall near Banias (A-Side) <i>Photo by WOII Arnold Felfer</i>	

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The Golan Journal is the magazine of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and it is intended to provide information about the Force and events within it which are of interest to its members. The UNDOF Media, Public Relations & Welfare Office publishes the Golan Journal quarterly. While articles and photographs are welcomed from all members of the Force, the view and opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily coincide with those of the United Nations or the Force Commander. The copyright of all material in this journal is vested in United Nations Publications except where an acknowledgment is made to another holder. No articles or illustrations may be reproduced without the permission of the editorial staff.

Force Commander's Message

Dear Fellow Peacekeepers!

It is once again a pleasure and a privilege to address you, my soldiers and civilian staff with a few lines in your Golan Journal, the voice of ALL Peacekeepers in the Golan Heights!

I am just amazed to think that I have been here with you as your Force Commander for nearly six months! The time has flown by. Already I am witnessing some of the first troop and staff rotations of my tenure here in UNDOF. To those who have recently left the mission to return to your families and the new adventures that await you at home, I congratulate you on a successful tour and I wish you all the very best in your future careers. To those who have just arrived in the Mission, "welcome and congratulations on being selected to serve in one of the best Missions in the world! I thank you for your contribution to peace in the Middle East and I wish you a safe and successful tour with UNDOF."

I do not need to remind anyone here that we are 'blessed' by that Chinese proverb to be 'living in interesting times'. Interesting they are indeed, but dangerous too. The peace that we experience here in this region is very fragile indeed, as recent events

in Lebanon and Gaza have proven. Thankfully the situation here in the Golan continues to remain calm and for that I thank all of you here in UNDOF for your continuing excellent efforts in this regard and your support to me, your Force Commander, to assist in maintaining this peace.

I believe that the peace we experience here in the Golan is no accident. I believe this is the result of the hard work by all of you here in UNDOF. For this I thank all of the national and international civilian staffs, the Contingents, the UNCMOs in OGG and the soldiers for your dedication and hard work. In particular I thank you for your efforts to improve the operational flexibility, mobility and capability of UNDOF so as to better meet the challenges of these modern times. I also applaud your efforts to improve the living conditions in the camps, positions and observation posts within UNDOF. In all of these areas and efforts I say, 'well done', but I would also add that this is just a beginning. You have accomplished a great deal, but there is more still to be done. Keep up the good work!

A highlight for all of us was the visit of the Secretary General of the United Nations, our leader and our



voice in New York,

SG Ban Ki-moon. It was a great privilege for all of us to host the SG in this way. During his visit, he re-affirmed the importance of peacekeeping worldwide but he also reminded us of the seriousness of our work. In this past year more than 100 peacekeepers lost their lives, including four UNCMOs in Lebanon last July. So I urge you, as you go about your work, to remember the importance and the seriousness of what we do and to strive individually to do your best for peace in the Golan.

To EVERYONE in UNDOF, I say ...

*Thank you, Diakujem,
Danke, Merci, Dziękuję,
Arigato, Dhanyavad,
Shukran, Doda!*

Major General Wolfgang JILKE
Force Commander UNDOF

Chief of Staff Words

It is time again to entertain you with my article. As usual, I will focus on the main operational issues which have happened or will happen in the near future in UNDOF.

Most of the operational projects are included in the Force Commander's Management System, which is an essential tool for the Command Group to give guidance, direction, and review the progress of major projects and issues in UNDOF HQ.

One of the projects was a review of the UNDOF Concept of Operations (CONOPS). As you may know UNDOF faces a new operational situation within the Area of Responsibility (AOR) due to the repopulation of the Area of Separation (AOS) and the dynamic development of civilian agriculture and construction projects. On the other hand, we observed a newly applied, more restricted policy along the Line of Separation (A-Line) due to the recent events along the Blue Line and in Lebanon.

These factors forced UNDOF to review and modify its CONOPS in order to be more capable of performing our UN duties on the Golan Heights and be fully responsible for our AOS. This capability is one of the most important factors, which UNDOF is well suited to do in fulfilling its mandate and building trust between the Parties.

As a result of the above mentioned operational situation and limitations imposed by the UN Mandate, UNDOF will steer to more mobile, foul weather and night operations on a 24/7 basis in order to meet current and future operational requirements.



The UNDOF mission is considered one of the most successful UN missions as it has managed to fulfill its mandate for more than three decades. However, it should be emphasized that this success has been built upon the progress of our predecessors. This is UNDOF, an organization that has fulfilled its tasks with dedication by reacting appropriately and on time as tensions between the conflicting parties had risen. The same is true for OGG (UNTSO), which provides excellent support to UNDOF within its operational functional area of responsibility. In general these two organizations respect the Agreement with the purpose of trying to solve problems in a more peaceful way.

Another project which is indirectly derived from the new CONOPS is the UNDOF Overall Manpower and Organizational Review (MOR), which has already commenced. The aim of the MOR is to streamline the UNDOF organization in order to ensure effective command and control, gener-

ate economies of scale, and reduce duplication of effort. In addition to unity of effort, unity of purpose and synergy within and between functional UNDOF areas are also important factors.

As a consequence, you can expect some changes in both the organization of UNDOF HQ and the Battalions, as well as reorientation to night operations and a more mobile Force.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing Chief Operations Officer (COO), LtCol Rudolf Zauner, for a job well done during the past year and his excellent and enduring support to me and to UNDOF's overall success.

Keep up the good work.

Colonel Andrzej Ostrowski
Chief of Staff UNDOF

Visitors to UNDOF by Capt Eiichiro Shinoda, DMPIO



Visit of MGen Shuichi Sato, Commanding General of 13th Brigade, Japan Ground Defense Force, visited both camps, met with FC and inspected J-CON activities. (23rd – 25th May 2007)

Visit of German Army Officer Cadets, fact finding in UNDOF and UNTSO. Visits to OP 51, CZ, Posn 22, and Mt. Bentel. (12th Jun 2007)



Visit of H.E. Mrs. Dirkje Elisabeth Bonis, Dutch Ambassador to Syria, familiarized with UNDOF and visited Qunaitra and OP72. (16th May 2007)



Visit of LtGen Waldemar Skrzypczak, Commander of Polish Land Forces, favored with his presence the Peacekeepers Day celebration at POLBATT together with Commander of 16th Mechanized Division MGen Ryszard Sorokosz. (29th May 2007)

Other visitors to UNDOF

Mrs. Lisa Bутtenheim, Director, Office of Operations, Asia & Middle East Division, DPKO, UNNY. (1st -3rd Apr 2007)

MGen Kenichi Kinomura, Director Ops Support & Intelligence Dept, GSO, Ministry of Defense, Japan. (9th – 12th Apr 2007)

H.E. Mr. Michel Duclos, French Ambassador to Syria. (19th Apr and 20th Jun 2007)

LtGen J. Mateparae, The New Zealand Chief of Defense Force. (21st Apr - 3rd May 2007)

MGen Jens E. Frandsen, Commander of the Danish Personnel Branch. (7th May 2007)

H.E. Mrs. Catharina Kipp, Swedish Ambassador to Syria. (17th May 2007)

H.E. Mr. Masaki Kunieda, Japanese Ambassador to Syria. (1st Jun 2007)



Visit of Ambassadors and Military Attachés on B-Side. UNDOF briefing at CF and tour through the AOS. (14th Jun 2007)



Visit of Ambassadors and Military Attachés on A-Side. Briefing on UNDOF activities and introduction tour in AOS/AOL. (19th Jun 2007).

New People in UNDOF



The new CMPO

LtCol Friedrich Steininger has been serving within the UN since 1978, when he started his career as a Peacekeeper in Cyprus as a Posn Cdr with the rank of Sergeant.

Shortly afterwards, he became an Officer and with a bit of luck he got a nine year contract to serve within the Austrian Armed Forces. During that time he was given the go ahead for his next mission in Cyprus, where he was posted as the Personnel Officer and Adjutant to the Commanding Officer.

After finishing his active duty in Austria, he decided to take on studies of history and history of arts at the University of Graz, the second largest city of Austria. He concluded his studies in 1991 with a Master's degree, and once more he went to Cyprus, this time as a CoyCdr. Afterwards he volunteered for UNDOF during the time when the settlement of the HQ from Damascus to CF took place.

There he was the CoyCdr of the HQ Coy but later he switched positions and became the Security Coordinator for the UNs Agencies in the Syrian Arab Republic as well as the Force Welfare Officer.

His last mission before this one led him to Cyprus once more; where he was again posted as a CoyCdr. After this mission he worked for 8 years in his civilian occupation. From November 2005 until March 2006 he served as a Duty Officer in UNDOF Headquarters. Afterwards until the end of March 2007 he successfully led the Media and Welfare Section as SSOM/PR&W. On 1st Apr 2007 he was appointed Chief Military Personnel Officer in UNDOF.



The new DCO AUSBATT and CO SLOVCON

Maj Vladimír Grišlo was born in 1967 in Ilava, Slovakia. After high school he attended Technical University in Bratislava and graduated in 1991 with an MS. He started to serve in the Slovak



The new COGG-D

LtCol Dermot Cogan arrived in the mission area on 14th Apr 2007 and assumed the responsibilities of COGG-D on 21st Apr 2007. This is his Seventh tour of duty with the UN and his experience in UN missions began with UNIFIL on its formation in 1978. He also served before with

UNTSO from 1986 to 1988, in four stations OGG-Tiberias, OG-Lebanon, OG- Beirut, and OG-Egypt, during this period. His last UN appointment was as Military Advisor to the Force Commander UNTAET in East Timor in 2000.

In 1992 he was Senior Operations Officer for Bosnia Herzegovina, with European Communities Monitoring Mission (ECMM) and returned to Sarajevo as Chief of the Serbia, Kosovo Analysis Section at EUMM Headquarters in 2002.

In his career he has held many key appointments including Aide De Camp to the President of his country, and Battalion Commander of various units including Infantry and Logistics.

He has a keen interest in all sports, and looks forward to the Rugby World Cup where he hopes to see Ireland compete successfully at the highest level.

Married to Margaret he has a son Der and daughter Louise and lives in the Southern Capital of Cork in Ireland.

Armed Forces in 1993 as a Commander of the Guard Platoon in Dubnica Váhom. Between 1994 and 1998 he was Commander of Guard Coy in Dubnica Váhom. From 1998 to 2001 he was Commander of a Coy for material provision of troops in a special regiment in Trenčin. Between 2001 and 2002 he attended the Command Staff course in Liptovský Mikuláš. From 2001 until 2006 he was Chief of Staff of Support Battalion of Headquarters Land Forces in Trenčin.

During the previous 6 months here on the Golan Heights we sometimes met him in the Officers Mess and CF because he served with high professionalism as a Duty Officer of Operations branch UNDOF HQ. He is married and has three children. His hobbies are sports in general.

New UNMOs to OGG-D

On the 15th Jun 2007, 16 new UNMOs arrived to UNTSO HQ Jerusalem from 13 different countries. Four of them were transferred to Observer Group Golan-Damascus (OGG-D).



New UNMOs in Souk Hamedieh - Training Damascus

The induction started with a four days training in Jerusalem HQ. After the induction training the new United Nations Military Observers (UNMOs) were transferred to three different outstations - Observer Group Lebanon, OGG-T and OGG-D. At the outstation OGG-D it was time for the next step (phase two) in the training.

To this phase of the training, UNMOs were transferred from other outstations to join the training.

Phase two included training 'Damascus', training, 'Golan' and outstation briefings.

The purpose of training Damas-



Maj Kristy Hudson from Australia during a Fire Fighting exercise in HQ Jerusalem.

cus and Golan is to familiarize the UNMOs with the new environment in Syria.

*Article and Photos by
Capt Stefan Mansson, OGG*

Ambassadors and Military Attachés visit UNDOF

The FC invited the Ambassadors and Military Attachés to Syria and Israel to UNDOF



Ambassadors and Military Attachés at the B-Gate

The UNDOF Force Commander (FC) MGen Wolfgang Jilke, invited the Ambassadors and Military Attachés of the Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) to UNDOF and UNTSO, the Permanent Member States to the 'UN Security Council' and the European Union to the Syrian Arab Republic on the 14th Jun 2007 to Camp Faouar (CF). The purpose of this meeting was to update these Diplomats on the cur-

rent situation of UNDOF, the developments on the Golan Heights and to provide them with an outlook on future activities.

After a first reception at the Austrians Officers Club the distinguished guests received an extensive briefing. The FC highlighted the main topics on UNDOF's agenda and clarified issues as necessary. To deepen the understanding for UNDOF's mandate, the distinguished guests were taken to the fields where they became introduced to the tasks and problem areas on the spot.

At OP 72 the party enjoyed a briefing on the UNTSO mandate and the tasks and life of a Military



At Barrel 20

Observer. The party then continued to B-Gate to be introduced to the function of the only UN Crossing Point between B-Side and A-Side.

The distinguished guests got a final briefing on the tasks of an



14th June 2007 - Altogether 17 Excellencies and 14 Attachés



19th June 2007 Group Picture in Camp Ziouani

UNDOF Line Battalion at POLBATT Posn 60. Exhausted from the heat and volume of information provided, the Ambassadors and Attachés enjoyed the Polish hospitality with a BBQ and drinks before heading back to Damascus.



At UNTSO OP 51

Mirroring the event of the 14th Jun 2007, Ambassadors and Attachés to Israel were invited to Camp Ziouani (CZ) on the 19th Jun 2007, where they received a warm welcome from the Indian soldiers of Logistic Battalion (LOGBATT).

UNDOF's guests then received

a similar introduction as their Syrian counterparts – only the briefing locations were different.

For UNTSO it was OP 53 as for UNDOF it was POLBATT Posn 22 and the A-Gate Crossing Point. At the final reception at

CZ the Ambassadors expressed to the Force Commander their gratitude for the invitation before enjoying the various national meals and drinks offered by the Indian, Polish and Japanese soldiers.

All participants - altogether 45 Excellencies and 30 Attachés - confirmed the value of the visit and how much they enjoyed their stay with UNDOF. They urged MGen Jilke to continue with this activity on a regular basis.



Where is the next briefing ?



Area of Responsibility of POLBATT - Posn 22

*Article by Maj Stefan Eder,
SSOM/PR&W*

*Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer,
Force Photographer
and by Sgt Thomas Hatzl*

AUSBATT (AB) Marching Challenge

From 11th to 12th May 2007 188 UNDOF soldiers took on the challenge of the AB-March

This year again 188 UNDOF soldiers challenged the 45 km marching distance, thereby overcoming 1854 meters of difference in altitude within two days.

Before the 'starter's gun' was fired, the Force Commander (FC), MGen Wolfgang Jilke, welcomed the participants of the AB-March on 11th and 12th May 2007.

The predicted weather forecast for the two days announced thun-



Polish patrol having a look at the map

derstorms and wind peaks up to 120 km/h in the area of Mount Hermon. This was rather untypical for the season and posed a major handicap to the participants.

This unfavorable forecast urged the organizing team to plan and



COS leading his Patrol exemplarily

redefine an alternative route for the second day. But as the sun shone brightly on Saturday not only in Camp Faouar, but even on Mount Hermon, the march could be continued on the traditional route.

Hence the participants could not enjoy the wonderful landscape, they also experienced the physical challenges along the E2A patrol

- climbing from Posn 10 over the western ridges of Mount Hermon to Posn Hermon South (HS) - the patrol routes of the 1st Coy and finally 'attain' the highest permanently manned UNPosition, Posn Hermon Hotel (HH).

I hereby would like to congratulate all the 147

participants, who finished the AB-March for their effort and thank all the Coys and the OpsBranch for their support in the course of preparation and performance.

*Article by
Maj Erwin Hubmann, COO/AB
and LCpl Kim Zi-Su
Photos by Sgt Thomas Aigner*



Final countdown from Posn Hermon Base to Posn Hermon Hotel (2814 m)

Medal Parade and National Day

On 1st May 2007 the Medal Parade took place in Camp Faouar under bright sunshine. 100 Austrian and Slovak soldiers were recognized for their performances within the scope of UNDOF.



*Maj Erwin Hubmann,
COO AUSBATT*

Maj Erwin Hubmann, Chief Operations Officer of AUSBATT (AB), reported the mustered battalion, consisting of the standard bearers, a Guard of Honor of Austrian and Slovak Soldiers of the Special Task Service (STS), the HQ-Coy and the three line companies to the Force Commander (FC), MGen Wolfgang Jilke.

The National Contingent Commander (NCC) of AUCON/UNDOF, LtCol Rudolf Zauner, was honored to welcome many Guests of Honor, as Ambassadors of the Czech Republic, Greece and

Hungary. The presence of numerous Military Attachés from the European Union, Japan, Canada and the USA, as well as the Commanders of neighboring Battalions and Observer Groups was a clear expression of the significance of the AB in Syria.

The whole ceremonial act was musically accompanied by 'Radio Gecko'. After the speech of the FC and the blessing of the medals by Chaplain Leszek Ryzka the bestowal of the medals was carried out as the highlight of the event. In his consecutive speech the representative of

the Austrian Ambassador, Charge d'Affaires in Syria, Martin Meisel, honored the displayed commitment of each and every soldier in measuring up to the assigned tasks and the proper appearance of the Austrian troops in Syria.

The FC expressed his thanks to the soldiers for their dedication and emphasized the importance of the mission. After the request for further orders by Maj Hubmann, the parting by defilation was carried out with the sounds of the 78th Regiment's march. While passing by the Tribune of Honor, the Medal-Bearers impressed in lockstep and taut attitude. As a pleasant close, all guests and soldiers were invited to a reception in the 'Rub Hall'.

*Article by
Capt Thomas Güttersberger, OpsInfoO
and LCpl Kim Zi-Su
Photos by Sgt Thomas Aigner*



The FC bestowing the medals

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon visits UNDOF

Surely the visit of UN Secretary General (SG) Ban Ki-moon on 24th Apr 2007 to Camp Faouar will be remembered as UNDOF's highlight of the year.

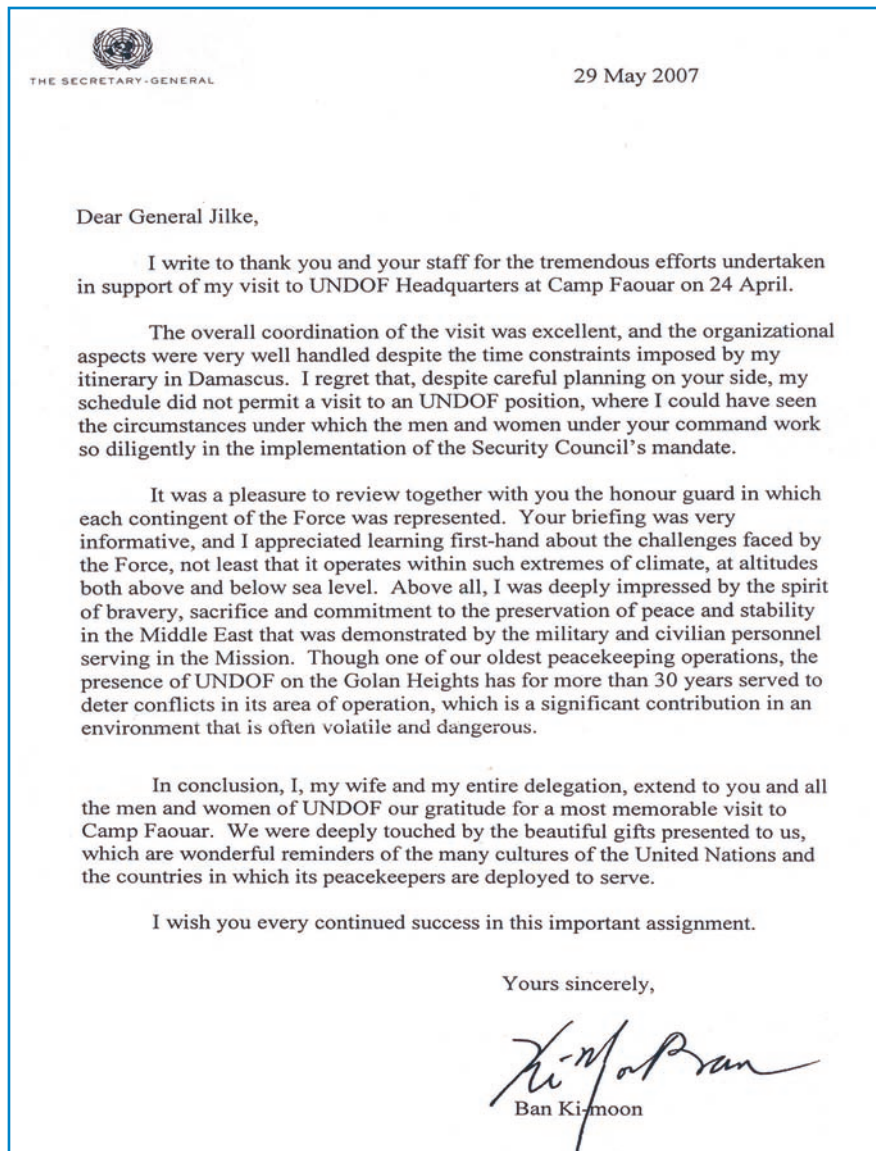


SG Ban Ki-moon strolling accompanied by FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke through Camp Faouar

Although the SG had a very tight itinerary on his tour to Syria, he took the time to have a look at 'his' peacekeepers on the Golan Heights.

Being welcomed by Force Commander (FC) MGen Wolfgang Jilke and a huge crowd of onlookers, SG Ban Ki-moon and FC inspected the flags of the Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) and the troops of UNDOF. After the military ceremony the FC introduced SG Ban Ki-moon to his military and civilian staff. Later, followed by excited UNDOF personnel, the SG walked through Camp Faouar and got a glimpse of UNDOF installations and living conditions.

The international dining facility was filled to capacity when the SG addressed the soldiers and civilian staff. SG Ban Ki-moon stressed,



Original of the Secretary General's letter

that one of his first diplomatic involvements within the UN was related to the establishment of UNDOF in 1974. He thanked all members of UNDOF for doing an excellent job in keeping peace in



FC and SG Inspecting the Troops



FC and SG salute the colours of the TCC

a really troubled area of the globe. He also emphasized the necessity to continue the mission to a peaceful resolution of the conflict and congratulated UNDOF for doing this in a rather unpretentious way during the last 33 years.

FC MGen Gilke, who as a young Lieutenant was with the advance party of UNEF soldiers from the Sinai that helped establish UNDOF, thanked the Secretary General for his encouraging words and support to the Mission. Before handing over tokens of appreciation to SG, Ban Ki-moon and Mrs. Yoo Soon-taek the FC promised to continue the good services for the people at Golan Heights by UNDOF according to the UN Mandate.

Before the SG left Camp Faouar, the local Civilian staff presented



Japanese Contingent marching by Ban Ki-moon



Civilian Staff present flowers to Mrs Yoo Soon-taek

him a typical gift from the region. All available soldiers and civilians waved farewell to the SG, wishing him and his entourage a safe trip back to New York and good luck for the demanding tasks ahead. SG, Ban Ki-moon, thank you once again for visiting UNDOF.

*Article by
Maj Stefan Eder,
SSOM/PR&W
Photo by
WO II Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer*

FORCE COMMANDER'S INSPECTION OF LOGBATT

The third rotation of IND LOGBATT (LB) arrived at UNDOF on 26th Mar 2007

During the address to troops at the TOCA ceremony on 30th Mar 2007, Force Commander (FC) MGen Wolfgang Jilke, who was part of the initial UNDOF deployment in May 1974 and has vast experience in the region, warned that the mission is a logistician's nightmare. The Logistic Support is to be provided not only over a diverse terrain ranging from mountains that experience heavy snow to regions 200 meters below sea level, but also to battalions deployed across the A-Side and B-Side and the requirement of procuring and issuing supplies on both sides.

Under the stewardship of its Cavalier Commanding Officer (CO/LB), LtCol Manish Rai the unit went into overdrive to adapt

with the ultimate aim to confirm to the FC that his Logistic Battalion is ready to undertake any operational/administrative task at short notice. Time literally flew and while out-

wardly there was complete calm and organized activity - like a duck floating on the water, underneath there was furious pedaling to keep afloat - similarly all personnel pushed themselves to meet self imposed deadlines that had been set.

A soldier's general that he is, MGen Jilke first expressed his desire to inspect the dining and living conditions of Indian troops and to have an informal interaction prior to checking out their professional acumen. Thus, on 2nd May 2007, the FC arrived at LB, Camp Ziouani (CZ) with a high profile

delegation including the UNDOF CAO Mr. Patrick J. Devaney, COS Col Andrzej Ostrowski and his MA. The CO/LB reported to



CO/LB introducing his team to the FC

MGen Jilke in front of the Guard of Honour and introduced his officers - team to the FC.

After meeting the officers, the FC was ushered to the International Kitchen where the FC believed that it would be the most appropriate place to judge the discipline and sincerity of the unit. He expressed his happiness with what he observed and complimented the kitchen staff on their efforts. Adding to that, the CAO who is a man of few words, commented that he had never seen the kitchen this clean and organized before. This was a shot in the arm for the Contingent. After inspecting every aspect of work involved in the kitchen, the FC was invited for a small presentation on India. The presentation was done by one of the youngest officers of the contingent, Capt Abhimanyu Varma as desired by the CO/LB. The Force Commander listened intently and his appreciation was visible to all.



FC in dialogue with Cpl Singh

and establish itself quickly in its new environment at UNDOF. A plan was chalked out and a timetable drawn to achieve a set of targets



FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke with the Rapid Reaction Group

After a short break, the FC was given a grand welcome by the troops of LB in the NCO's club, referred to as GOLAN CLUB. The club was specially renovated for this occasion. The Force Commander watched the troops perform the folk dance of Punjab (Bhangra). Soon he found himself tapping to the beats of Bhangra. Troops could not be happier to see the Commander dance with them. After this brief celebration with the troops, the Commander and his delegation

was a little too much to handle for the sporting Commander, but he enjoyed every bit of it.

Soon, came the next big day when the unit was informed that MGen Jilke would inspect the unit thread by thread to make an assessment of its operational worthiness on 10th May 2007.

The Force Commander was received by the Commanding Officer and after a short briefing he was conducted to the Maintenance Platoon where Maj MK Tiwari

tried some 'Sake' at the J-CON 'A-Line Mess' and thereafter moved for a quiet dinner with the officers of LB at the Officer's Mess. The dinner cooked in Indian spices

gave a presentation on the role and the tasks performed by the platoon and conducted him around his platoon to give a first hand experience of the tasks being undertaken in the workshop.

Thereafter, the FC visited the Supply Platoon where he was briefed by Maj PK Tiwari. The Commander was visibly impressed with the colossal effort made by the troops of Supply Platoon to organize the store and to learn about their efficiency in performing their tasks. He was apprised how LB could be more effectively utilized and also the willingness of the unit to undertake additional tasks. After inspecting the Supply Platoon, he visited the Engineering Platoon. One thing that amused the FC the most, was that the family name of most of the soldiers here is 'Singh' except for a few. He jokingly asked everyone, "Are all of you from the same family"? The men could not be more amused and the FC was delighted. Then, he visited the Smokey Shack, Medical Center, the Signals Platoon and thereafter, joined the officers for a working lunch at the Officer's Mess. Later, the Force Commander declared the unit fit for all operational tasks and conveyed to CO/LB his utmost appreciation and praise for the way the unit had shaped up in the little time that it had.

He was assured that the unit will never lose steam and shall willingly undertake all assigned tasks in a professional manner and achieve the targets/goals set for it by the Force Commander.



(counter-clockwise) MGen Wolfgang Jilke, LtCol Manish Rai, Mr Patric J. Devaney, MA with the Bhangra Troupe

*Article by
Capt Abhimanyu Varma, CCIO*

*Photos by
WO II Mahidur Rahaman, PRODO*

Volleyball Championships in Camp Ziouani

There were two volleyball matches played in Camp Ziouani (CZ). At first POLBATT's team competed with LOGBATT on Monday 28th May 2007, second on 7th Jun 2007 against J-CON.

On this sunny afternoon two teams stood opposite each other on the Polish field accompanied by a mass of supporters from both contingents. Never before they had met each other on the playing field, so the tension could be seen on each players face. No one knew the potential of their competitors nor their weak or strong sides, so the only possible tactic left was to attack fiercely and just simply win. Fans had prepared banners and one seemed to be prophetic.

The Polish team began the match at 18:30, but the first points were scored by their Indian friends. At the beginning they showed determination and skill, and that to defeat them would not be easy. However white-red shirts got back on their feet very quickly blocking effectively a leading attacker of opponents and soon equaled the score. The fair and bitter fight continued to the end of the set, though the supremacy of POLBATT was increasingly visible. The first set finished with a score of 25 to 21 in favor of the Polish team.

During the second set the Polish block prevented the Indians from taking over the initiative whereas attackers were most effective executing ball smashes



A focus on a serious, but fair fight



Prophetic banner with final score



A group photo with the Indian and the Polish Flags

one after another. The third set looked similar. The Indian team was shattered, being unable to find a solution for breaking in. Nothing could snatch a victory away from the hands of Polish soldiers. In effect they totally defeated the Indian's team 3:0 in sets.

The second match against J-CON was played by POLBATT on 7th Jun 2007. It was a very windy afternoon. The ball hit high and sometimes returned to the same half of the playing field. But nothing could disturb the great fun during the play. Fans from both teams were prepared very well. Equipped with flags, trumpets and a drum they cheered for their teams. The first two sets POLBATT won easily, but the third was not so simple. The strong characters of samurais woke up in the Japanese players' hearts and they fought fiercely to the last ball. Finally the Polish team won the set with the score 27 to 25 thus winning also the entire match.

After each match the CO/PB LtCol Jarosław Gromadziński handed over certificates of remembrance to the Captains of each team and invited everyone to the Polish mess.

*Article and Photos by
Capt Andrzej Czekaj,
PressO/PB*

The first 'White Sunday' in the history of UNDOF

From the initiative of the Polish Military Contingent's Commander on the Golan Heights, **LtCol Jarosław Gromadziński** on 29th Apr 2007 an operation of primary medical health was conducted administering to the people of Kudnaa village within the area of POLBATT (PB) responsibility commonly named in Poland "White Sunday".

In the more than 30 years old history of UNDOF no one before had undertaken such a challenge due to the big cultural differences and sensitivity of Arab people to the European behavior and way of life. Despite some fears that any action would be very unpopular, many patients came to our Medical personnel. Persons in need were arriving even from neighboring villages varying from elderly and disabled to children and infants. This could only be seen as true evidence of the deep trust of the local people in the soldiers with the white and red flag on their shoulders.

After about 5 hours of action PB's Medical personnel under the leadership of Maj Andrzej Szymański were doing their best while standing in the rays of the Golan's sun to help the local society.

About 85 patients were examined and advised by Polish Doctors, some were given necessary medicine, injections and dressings. Our nurses WO Anna Paradowska and WO Elżbieta Pitura were called 'Angels' due to their commitment and joyous smile bestowed to the youngest of patients. Of those examined there were also difficult cases, after accidental injuries and underlying bone conditions. These were examined by the Orthopedist from Posn 60 – Capt Bogdan Strączyński, who did not hesitate



*Personnel of medical team during their work,
LCpl Kamil Kasprowicz,
WO Anna Paradowska, Capt Wojciech Kuźniak*

to give advice to the man with leg paralysis who was brought on a mini-truck's platform, the most common means of transport in this country.

The biggest problem faced was the lack of translators to explain each patient's troubles to the doctors. The Syrian Liaison Officers assisted by Capt Edward Chyłą were doing a good job trying to be concurrently in several places. But soon after, the situation improved with the help of the local English teachers that made communication with the patients much easier for Capt-Wojciech Kuźniak.

The heat was an additional hardship, which particularly affected the children, but our 'Blue Helmets' under the sign of the 'White Eagle' were prepared for such circumstances as well. They handed over mineral water,

cold drinks and fruits which were accepted with great joy. The action was organized under the auspice of UNDOF HQ, local administration and representatives of the Syrian Medical Health. Among these persons present were LtCol Shailja Os Karki - the Force Medical Officer - representatives of local authorities and the Head Doctor of Qunaitra Province, Mr. Rabi Osman.

In the opinion of the local people the action was well accepted and appreciated. PB's CO seeing that commitment and eagerness to cooperate from the Syrians stated that this operation would be continued in a wider extent with full cooperation with other contingents that had supported it and would like to join in the future.



*Chief of Medical Team
Maj Andrzej Szymański*

*Article and Photos by
Capt Andrzej Czekał, PressO/PB*

New faces in SLOVCON

On the 5th Jun 2007 AUSBATT conducted its routine rotation, so also in SLOVCON something happened.

We ask some questions to new 3rd Coy Commander Capt Stanislav Šraga. He was born on 3rd Jun 1973, is married and has two children. In Slovak Armed Forces he serves 17 years. Before his leaving to UNDOF mission he served as a commander of artillery reconnaissance battery in Michalovce. This is his first mission abroad.

Was your pre-deployment training in Slovakia useful? What do you think?

Our pre-deployment training was well organized and consists of two parts. First we were trained in January 2007 in UN Training Centre in Martin. This centre has a rich history and their instructors are really professional. We took theoretical background about UNDOF mission, also. We were trained as we will fight. I don't really mean fight but as we will serve under 'Blue Flag'. After then in April 2007 we continued one month training with all new soldiers. Our training was finished in Götzendorf, at last. I think all this steps were necessary and help as to adapt to new conditions.



MSgt Jozef Mesiarkin, MP B Detachment, SSgt Roman Hudek, MP C Detachment and Sgt Ladislav Kovac, MP A Detachment

Can you describe your new colleagues from SLOVCON in short?

From total members of 95 persons of Slovcon there are 54 new

people with me. For Slovak persons it is allowed to serve abroad for a maximum of one year. So in this rotation came most of commanding positions like DCO, CoyCdr, DepCoyCdr, PltLdr, etc.



Capt Stanislav Šraga, Lt I Marek Uchal', Lt I Radoslav Oláh and other members of SLOVCON during leave-taking in Slovak Republic

New faces in SLOVCON

In this rotation are also two women. How will they contribute to UNDOF?

I have as the commander of STS MSgt Judita Halaszova and the new DepLdr Posn 33, Sgt Miroslava Fabriciova. MSgt Halaszova has good experiences with commanding people from her previous duty in Slovakia. I know her for long time and I can say she is the right person at right place.

Capt Šraga can you inform us - how is your duty in international team?

Great. It is big experience for us to serve in an international team. We can increase our military knowledge and also understand various procedures.



Leader 2nd Squad STS, MSgt Halaszova



*SLOVCON Commanders during 'Line Tour' at 1st Coy/AB
From left: Sgt Rodak, Sgt Maľuk, MSgt Kaščák, MSgt Goliaš, Maj Vladimír Grišlo DCO/AB,
MSgt Hanuščák, Capt Stanislav Šraga, Lt I Radoslav Olah, Lt II Kováč, MSgt Knapík*

Syria and Israel are countries with rich history. What are your plans to visit during UNDOF duties?

Yes, I know there are big historical and cultural monuments and places. For me most interesting are Damascus, Nazareth, Jerusalem, for us Middle Europeans the Dead Sea is also very interesting. I hope we will have opportunity to see most of those beauties.

*Article and Photos by
Lt I Radoslav Oláh,
SuppO/SLOVCON*

Welcome to CLUB FUJI

Club Fuji is located in Camp FAOUAR



'SAKURA'
(cherry tree)

As you know, Club Fuji is located in Camp FAOUAR. Some people call it Fuji House or Fuji Hut. Thanks to your kind

cooperation, Club Fuji is popular not only among the Japanese Peacekeepers but among other contingents as well.

Fuji Club is located near the Pentagon UNDOF HQ and it is shaped octagonally, like an eight sided polygon and is easily found. Club Fuji is decorated with many Japanese decorations and ornaments. In addition, it is equipped with the latest TV systems and Japanese games.

After a few drinks, and good conversation, we are better prepared for the next day to come! Fuji Club offers an environment that promotes friendship and better understanding



'Club Fuji' Camp FAOUAR



'AKACYOUCHIN' (red lantern, traditional sign of bar)

between people from different countries and cultures. Although it is usually difficult to speak in English, when drinking together, everyone communicates at ease. Club Fuji offers Japanese Sake (hot or cold) and three kinds of beer, we also serve Japanese snacks: 'Wasabi & Kakinotane.'

It would be our great pleasure to welcome you to Club Fuji. Stop by, have a drink and get to know us. We are waiting.



'We are friends'

*"You are welcome!
Let's say,
Kampai!"
(cheers)*

*Article by Capt Y. Hayash,
Photos by SSgt Mukai
and SSgt Kimura
and WO III Takahashi*

Heavy Duty at Golan Heights

After AUSBATT's rotation at the beginning of June, all the training within the mission started. A part of this is the familiarization and training on equipment that is not available in Austria such as the SISU and the M-113 Armored Personnel Carriers (APC).

As we have specifically trained personnel in the mission it is quite an easy task but also a kind of challenge as most of the drivers have their first experience with these types of vehicles.

The SISU training was conducted by Chief Instructor WO I Josef Graber, who has completed a special training by PATRIA COMPANY who manufactures the SISUs. Each course took five days and six personnel on average and one part focused on technical training, vehicle checks, maintenance as well as recovery by the winch. The other part paid special attention on the driving skills, as the area of AUSBATT has not only difficult terrain but also a lot of traffic and narrow roads in the villages. As patrolling is not only done in daytime, special attention was given to night driving training, which included two night patrols on each course.

Three weeks later a total of 17 Austrian and Slovakian drivers successfully completed the SISU courses and will now be the responsible persons for conducting APC patrols in UNDOF's Area of Responsibility. The other APC training course was conducted in the area of



M-113 in action, or how to get 'Grey Hair' at 'Mount Hermon'



SISU managing difficult grounds



Smiling faces, having successfully passed the drivers training course

1st Coy/AB on Mount Hermon under the responsibility of Tank Driving Instructor WO I Karl Tupi and took place from 26th to 29th June 2007. As there are only four M-113s in UNDOF it is a special challenge to train the drivers in the difficult terrain of the Hermon massif, as everybody knows who has been in that area before. The training schedule was similar to the one for the SISUs, but driving the M-113 is totally different, as it has not a steering wheel but steering brakes and you have to accelerate to go around a curve. After these four days WO I Tupi had some grey hair, maybe because of the driving skills of the participants or because of the dust in the area. Nevertheless all six participants successfully passed the final test and were awarded with a certificate for the highest Austrian driver's course.

Finally it has to be mentioned that being a driver of an APC is a great responsibility, not only for the vehicle, but also for the personnel carried in the tank. So I would like to wish them all the best for their duties and an accident free time in UNDOF.

*Article by Maj Karl Curin,
MTO/AB*

*Photos by WO I Karl Tupi
and LCpl Andreas Trabi*

Good-Bye!

Recently my husband asked me how I felt about us being old enough to retire. Initially I was surprised because, to tell the truth, I don't think of us as old. Not wanting to upset me, he switched subjects but then I explained that it was a topic worth discussing and that I needed to think it through. Surprisingly it took me some time to answer him.

But then I decided that growing old is just another one of life's gifts and that the wisdom of age will help to make each day ever so interesting. We call each new day 'the present' because it is just that - 'a gift'.

And it is my wish that with each new day we find that we are blessed with ordinary miracles where we can love simply and generously, care deeply, speak kindly and one day unwrap the present and find that so often referred to 'future filled with peace'.

To all, one great joy for me has been our working together as I truly believe that our person-to-person connections have helped in building the foundation for peace. And especially to all national staff, together we hurdled previously established bounds as with each day we shared not only our work but the joys and sorrows that entered into our daily lives and we reached out to each other in ways that only good friends and neighbors can do. Together, we are part of the family of Peace-keepers.

As some of you know, I had hoped that I would have met everyone face-to-face over a good cup of coffee by now but this will remain one of my retire-



ment dreams to be fulfilled. I will await that invitation.

So as we remember to unwrap our gift of today, let us hope that one day it will contain peace especially for our region.

Thanks for the memories, Lynn.

Article by Mrs E. Lynn Elvaiah,
Procurement Assistant
Photos by WO II Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer

The New Medical Center at Camp Faouar - Part 4 of 4

Based upon combined efforts at the final stage of the project the inauguration ceremony of the new Medical Center took place at Camp Faouar on 23rd May 2007.



The audience listens to the FC's address

Prior to reaching this goal quite a few preliminary measures were taken by several parties. For example, UNDOF Engineering Section coordinated the implementation of external ground works, asphaltting, landscaping and the interior installation phase. UNDOF General Services had provided the furniture, kitchen equipment and installation and took over the lead for the beautification of the surrounding area by rolling lawn-tiles around the new structure. Finally the successful on time accomplishment was delivered by the Medical Team of AUSBATT. They were in charge



Overwhelmed Maj Roman Zaller, FCEO and project manager presents 'his' project

of relocating the medical infrastructure from the old to the new centre by providing 24/7 medical services to all UN personnel. In fact, not an easy job!

The most critical circumstance was to meet the deadline of the shipment arrival of the medical assets and equipment. These items were to be provided by the Austrian Ministry of Defence. To easily spoken! But thinking about smaller details like the availability of the Austrian Air Force Plane - C 130 Hercules, the internal management within several departments of the ministry and finally to gather customs declaration & certification, it became clear to everyone that it wasn't so easy. In achieving this goal two names must be mentioned personally. Maj Arno Wenzl, the Chief Logistic Officer of AUSBATT, and Maj Markus Pschandl who is in charge as the Chief Logistic Officer of the Austrian International Operations Command. He is presently responsible to supply all Austrian Troops which are serving abroad. These two men made it finally happen and all required equipment arrived at the mission area on time. As the very last act the new structure had been visited, inspected and certified by an Austrian Medical Expert Team. The following subjects had been evaluated to the satisfaction of the experts: Pharmacy, Radiology, Environmental & Occupational Medicine, and Hygiene. The head of delegation, BGen MD Hoffmann signed off the certifica-



FC with Maj MD Werner Steinberger cutting the ribbon at the handover ceremony

tion document. The way was 'paved' to relocate the old medical facility and to occupy the new one.

On 23rd May 2007 the final ceremonial act had been carried out. LtCol Glanner, CO/AB, gave the opening speech to the auditors. Also Syrian civilian contractors had been invited to take part in the ceremony. FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke addressed the auditors and highlighted the fundamental need for such a new facility and a job well done by the UNDOF Engineers. Prior to entering the building for a 'walk around tour' the FC was asked to cut the ribbon and to officially open the New Medical Center at Camp Faouar. May I thank each and everyone who contributed to the successful accomplishment of this project in general, and all UNDOF Engineers in particular for their crucial commitment?

...finished!

*Article by Maj Roman Zaller,
FCEO*

*Photos by WO II Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer*

