

nder 8

It amazes me again, how quickly three months can pass by, and yet again there is so much to talk and write about.

First of all, let me welcome our newly arrived Press Officers: Capt Alexander Neuherz (AUSBATT), Lt II Jan Kováč (SLOVCON), and Capt Ronald Oliver (OGG). As always, a big round of applause for all Press Officers and your great articles. Unfortunately, when so many new people arrive, also some others go back home and in this case we have to say Good - Bye to Capt Gregor Zeleznik (OGG), Capt Uwe Sandrieser (AUSBATT) and LtI Marek Uchal (SLOVCON), who did a great job for our Golan Journal. Thanks a million for all your hard work and support. We'll miss

you! WO II Gernot Payer, one of the most experienced photographers I ever met, recently came back after ½ a year of absence in the mission and will bring in again his professional skills to make our editorial work again successful. Welcome on board again Gerry!

Apart from that, there UNDOF' (see pages 6, 7).

For me it is time to say Good- and the Golan Journal! Bye to our readers, I'm going home for a new challenge to join my familv which will count very soon fife instead of four. My wife and I are looking forward to get a new born



Ichiro, Stefan, Gerry and Hermann

has been also a lot of action, like the baby in a few days and so someone Photo Contest 2007 (see page 12, else will have to take care for my 13), the Presidents visits (see page responsibilities here at the Golan 9, 10) and lots of 'New People to Heights. I will miss you! Thanks to everyone for all your support to us

> Yours sincerely. Capt Hermann J. Altmanninger, SOPR

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Editorial Staff:

Senior Editor & SSOM/PR & Welfare Maj Stefan Eder

Editor, Proofreader, Interpreter & SOPR Capt Hermann J.

Altmanninger Editor & DMPIO

Capt Eiichiro Shinoda Senior Proofreader &

SO/Training Capt Stefan Zaiser

Editor, Layout Designer & Force Photographer WOII Gernot Paver

Unit Press Officers:

AUSBATT - Capt Alexander Neuherz

SLOVCON - Lt Jan Kováč

INDCON - Capt Kranthi Kumar J-CON - Lt Takaihiro Shibukawa

POLBATT - Capt Sylwester Wlaszczyk

OGG - Capt Ronald Oliver

MP - Maj Siddharta Rathore



Editorial Office: UNDOF HQ Camp FAOUAR

E-Mail: undof-photo@un.org

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.

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Force Commander's Message

Dear Fellow Peacekeepers!

Yet another year is upon us here in UNDOF. I hope that everyone found an opportunity to enjoy the holiday season, whether it was spent here in the Golan with your fellow comrades, on leave at home, or elsewhere with family and friends. For Christians, Muslims and Yews alike, this time of year is dedicated to thoughts of peace and hopes for a better future. It is a time to reflect upon what we have accomplished, and to commit ourselves to new or renewed goals in the upcoming year.

As you are no doubt aware, as Head of Mission, I am charged with the accomplishment of our Mandate as defined by the 1974 Disengagement Agreement and reaffirmed by our UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, last December. As your Force Commander, I am also greatly concerned about your safety and well-being, on top of our operational effectiveness. In considering all of my personal responsibilities to you and this Mission, I have re-dedicated myself to accomplishing the various objectives which were started last year and to further improving all aspects of our Mission. In order to do this, I invite everyone to join with me in focussing our efforts this year on results-oriented actions, measures, and ideas.

To advance our operational effectiveness and ensure our mission success, several important items await our attention. UNDOF will continue to improve and expand its night observation, reporting, and

response capabilities, integrating new Night Vision equipment with revised procedures and better coordination with the Military Observers of Observer Group Golan. OGG is itself in the midst of restructuring, following up on recommendations made by the Baril Report and initiatives from within both UNTSO and UNDOF. Coincident with the changes being made to its organization and command structure, OGG operations need to be better integrated within UNDOF. This will require improvements to our own command, control and communications (C3) structure and procedures. Included in this will be an overhaul of our Operations shelter to turn it into a more effective Command Post. Force HQ Company personnel can expect the development and implementation of a robust training plan to ensure that they are prepared to meet the demands of their assigned tasks.

We are awaiting the delivery of a limited number of new RG-32M Armoured Patrol Vehicles, which will allow us to convert two of our existing SISU vehicles into Armoured Ambulances. Together, these vehicles will improve our effectiveness along with the safety of our personnel. Other force protection enhancements will include the upgrading of physical security arrangements in Camps Faouar and Ziouani. Improvements to our welfare and surroundings will include "Operation Clean-Up" at Camp Faouar, the continued refurbishment of various UNDOF positions, and a gradual revitalization of our two main gymnasiums.



There are many tasks which have been started but have yet to bear fruit, and issues that will require a concerted effort from many people to resolve and complete. I seek your continued cooperation and professionalism in addressing the challenges ahead. Motivated by our common desire to achieve our Mission's objectives in the safest and most effective manner possible, I am certain of our mutual success.

In the Service of Peace, 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

s you are aware the UNDOF mandate is subject to renewal every six months by resolution of the United Nations Security Council. The first resolution was Security Council Resolution (SCR) 350 dated 31st May 1974. Due to the fact that the last resolution expired on 31st Dec 2007, the Secretary General (SG), Mr. Ban Ki-moon submitted a report on UNDOF for the last six months to initiate the procedure for UNDOF's mandate extension. The report indicated that the continued presence of UNDOF in the area is essential because the situation in the Middle East is tense and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached. The report received at the Security Council and by both nations in conflict expressed their agreement to continue with the mandate. Shortly thereafter the SCR 1788 dated 14th Dec 2007 was published and will expire on 30th Jun 2008. It is worthwhile to mention that the SG emphasized in his report that, "UNDOF has performed with efficiency and devotion to duty the important tasks assigned to UNDOF by the Security Council".

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all UNDOF and OGG members for their professionalism and outstanding contribution to the success of the UNDOF mission.

As earlier mentioned the situation in the Middle East is tense and can easily deteriorate and pose serious security problems for UNDOF. These past few months we have learned about renewed attacks against UN peacekeepers in Lebanon, the attacks on the UN offices in Algiers, and the threaten-

ing remarks made towards the UN by Al Qaeda spokesman. Thus, it can not be ruled out that UNDOF might be a target for any terrorist group, as well. In consequence, UNDOF requires some quick solutions to improve safety and security of personnel and re-double our efforts to improve force protection capabilities.

The spectrum of measures to be taken is wide and includes, inter alia: assessing the present level of UNDOF security system and its measures to mitigate threat, reviewing our vulnerabilities, and ensuring that host countries provide adequate

security. Most of the information on UNDOF's security system is classified. Thus, it is difficult for me to address security issues in detail in an unclassified forum such as the Golan Journal magazine. When discussing security measures I specifically refer to assessment, precautionary measures and possible vulnerabilities of the UNDOF security system. It must be emphasized that this is also guidance for all UNDOF personnel not to openly discuss UNDOF security measures.

However, I believe that UNDOF has already made significant progress in this functional area including physical security. To this end UNDOF physical security has been enhanced through the following means: reorganization of the current guard system in Camp Faouar which is augmented from the Force HQ Coy and NCOs from UNDOF HQ, improved monitoring system by establishing wise cameras and sensors, initiating extension of current and/or establishing new security walls on positions, and the



reorganization of UNDOF/OGG Operational Center and improving its physical protection. In addition, UNDOF will be converting two APCs into armoured ambulances with other security initiatives to be announced and implemented in the near future.

On a final note I would like to caution all UNDOF members on your individual safety and security when off duty. Personal safety and security is an individual responsibility. Please be vigilant at all times, be aware of your surroundings and report any suspicious behaviors and/or activities. One of the best sources of information and guidance for you is the COS Weekly Safety and Security Report.

Keep up the good work.

healed

Colonel Andrzej Ostrowski Chief of Staff UNDOF

Visits to UNDOF by Capt Eiichiro Shinoda, DMPIO



LtGen Isao Mukunoki, Director of Intelligence Headquarters, MOD, Japan. Visited CZ, got briefed on J-CON activities and about the AOS on Mt. Bental. (23rd Oct 2007)



MGen Koichi Isobe, VCG of Central Readiness Force of Japans Ground Self Defense Force. Visited A- and B-side, talked with the FC and recognized the UNDOF & J-CON activities (31st Oct - 2nd Nov 2007)



Visit of H.E. Jacek Chodorowicz the Ambassador of Poland to the Syrian Arab Republic. Participating the celebration of the Polish Independent Day at Posn 60 (9th Nov 2007)



Visit of the President of the Austrian Federal Republic, Dr. Heinz Fischer at UNDOF. He spent some special time with Austrian soldiers at CF and in the AOR of AUSBATT (16th - 17th Dec 2007) see page 8



Visit of the Slovak President, Mr. Ivan Gašparovič and the Minister of Defense Mr. František Kašický, their words of encouragement became a great Christmas gift for the Slovak soldiers (18th Dec 2007) see page 10

Mr. Shigeki Miyazima, Famous Writer from Japan (4th - 5th Oct 2007)

Mr. Choi Soon - Hong, Chief Information Technology Officer, Office of the Secretary-General to UNDOF (19th - 20th Oct 2007)

Ms. Kristina Segula, Middle East Team Leader, UNHQ (27th - 30th Oct 2007)

Col Nobuhiko Sato, VCG of 3rd Div, Japan Ground Defense Force (12th - 15th Nov 2007)

Ms. Stephanie Wright and 17 Members of the Canadian Embassy (16th Nov 2007)

Ms. Krista Sager and Mr. Fritz Kuhn, Members of the German Parliament (19th Dec 2007)

H.E. Oldrich Hlavacek, Slovak Ambassador to the Syrian Arab Republic (24th - 25th Dec 2007)

New People in UNDOF



The new CMPO

LtCol Kazimierz Jozwiak arrived in the Golan Heights on 30th Nov 2007 as the new Chief Military Personnel Officer (CMPO) of UNDOF HQ. LtCol Jozwiak was born in Lublin, the eastern part of Poland near the Ukrainian border on 2nd Jan 1961. In 1980 after he graduated

from high school LtCol Jozwiak joined Officers College. In 1984 after graduating from Officers College he was promoted to Lieutenant and was assigned his first operational tour of duty as reconnaissance platoon commander. Since then LtCol Jozwiak has served in various positions and places in the western and southern part of Poland.

In 1996 he served his first UN mission duty in UNDOF as 2iC, later OiC of 2nd Coy POLBATT. In 2001 LtCol Jozwiak served with the KFOR mission in Kosovo as HQ Staff Officer. In 2002 he was selected to supervise the election in Bosnia and Herzegovina as an OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) observer.

From 2003 to 2006 he was posted to NATO HQ - SHAPE (Supreme Headquarter Allied Power in Europe) in Belgium. He started this tour of duty with SHAPE as an arms control expert dealing with all arms control treaties discussed at OSCE in Vienna.

During the second part of this NATO tour LtCol Jozwiak assumed the responsibilities as JOC senior officer where he oversaw the NATO Balkans Joint Operations specifically NATO reserve forces. As a Polish General Staff J3 senior officer LtCol Jozwiak participated in many multinational exercises such as the CMX, STRONG RESOLVE and AMBER SHIELD.

Throughout his operational tours LtCol Jozwiak has successfully completed more than 150 parachute jumps. LtCol Jozwiak continued with his professional studies and graduated from the Physical Education University and National Defense University.

In addition, he attended several international courses such as the Conventional Forces Europe course (Oberammergau Germany), the Peacekeeping Operations course (Kingston Canada), and the Crisis

Management Operations course (Brussels Belgium).

LtCol Jozwiak is married to Irena and they have two children a son Marek 19 who is a university student and a daughter Anna 12, a primary school student. His family lives in Lublin Poland. During his leisure time LtCol Jozwiak enjoys spending time with his family, swimming, orienteering and reading interesting books.



The new CO/LB

Born on 10th Dec 1970, LtCol Kanwar Vijay Vir Singh belongs to 'The Poona Horse', an elite Armoured Regiment of the Indian Army. Having completed his training at the Officer's Training Academy, Chennai, LtCol Kanwar Vijay Vir Singh passed out first

in the order of Merit and received the President's Gold Medal. He got commissioned into the Indian Army on 21st Aug 1993.

After completing the Young Officers' Course in Armoured Warfare, he attended the Auto Instructor's Course at the Armoured Corps Centre & School, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, where in 1997 he was deputed as an Instructor. He has served as a Troop Leader, Squadron 2iC and Squadron Commander of his Combat Group. He has had the rare distinction of serving with the Army Aviation Corps, as a helicopter pilot for 6 years and has more than thousand hours of flying experience.

LtCol Kanwar Vijay Vir Singh has served in the plains and desert sectors as also the mountainous terrain in the extreme north east of India. An adventure enthusiast, he has represented the Armoured Corps and the Indian Army thrice in the Himalayan Car Rally and Indian National Rally Championships, for which he has been awarded the General Officer Commanding in Chief's Commendation Card.

Lt Col Kanwar Vijay Vir Singh is married to Mrs Sonika Singh and they are blessed with a son and a daughter.



The new NCC SLOVCON / DCO AUSBATT

LtCol Jozef Figura was born on 16th Oct 1967. After graduating from Military High School he joined Military Academy in the year 1985. After leaving the

Academy he was promoted to Lieutenant.

His first place of duty just after graduation from the academy was in Brezno. He became a reconnaissance platoon leader in the 49th Artillery Regiment in Brezno.

From 1991 to 1993 he served as a battery commander in the 55th Mechanized Brigade in Trebišov.

In 1994 he became artillery battalion commander in this brigade. In 1996 his battalion moved to Michalovce. In 1998 he was promoted to Major and in 1999 he graduated from Higher Staff Officers' Course in Liptovský Mikuláš.

From 2000 to 2003 he was appointed as the Commander of the Artillery Battalion of the Mechanized Brigade in Prešov.

After that, in 2004 he served as an artillery battalion commander of the 5th Artillery Brigade in Jelšava. In 2005 there was established the Mixed Self-propelled Artillery Battalion of 2nd Mechanized Brigade in Prešov and he served there as the Battalion Commander till his posting to this mission.

LtCol Figura participated in many field trainings, including the international exercise "Blue Line".

He is married to Maria and they have together the 18 years old son Juraj. Among his hobbies you'll find history, reading and music.



The new MA/FC and NCC CANCON

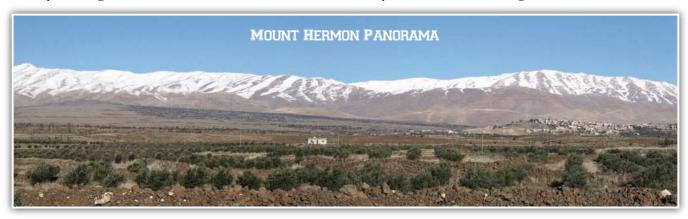
Maj Dwayne Lovegrove joined the Canadian Forces (CF) in May 1981. After graduation from "Le College Militaire Royal de St-Jean", he completed pilot training

in 1987. He has flown numerous types of jet, helicopter, and transport aircraft in a wide variety of roles and environments. Combat-experienced, Maj Lovegrove has participated in numerous UN-sanctioned active duty deployments to the Middle East, including Operations DESERT SHIELD, SOUTHERN WATCH and ENDURING FREEDOM.

He has filled a variety of staff positions, including Air Operations Officer, Staff Officer to the Director-General of Force Development, Officer Development instructor and Deputy Flight Commander at the CF School of Aerospace Studies, and "Aide-de-Camp" to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba. His international experience includes five years on exchange with the United States Air Force and six months as a Military Liaison Officer to the United Arab Emirates. Prior to arriving, Maj Lovegrove served at Canada's National Defence Headquarters as a strategic planner in the Strategic Joint Staff, specializing in the Middle East and Asia-Pacific regions.

He joined UNDOF in July for a year-long tour of duty as the Military Assistant to the Force Commander and the Commander of the Canadian Contingent.

Maj Lovegrove is married, speaks French, enjoys outdoor activities, computers and wine making, and has nearly finished a Masters degree in War Studies.



Honourable Visit in the Area of Separation

Visit of the Federal President of Austria Dr. Heinz Fischer in the Area of Separation and the Austrian Minister of Defence Mag. Norbert Darabos at the 2nd Coy, AUSBATT on 17th Dec 2007

With the rotation in the end of November it was known that President Dr. Heinz Fischer and the Minister of Defence Mag. Norbert Darabos accompanied by LtGen Mag. Günter Höfler and a big delegation will visit AUSBATT on the Golan Heights.

When 2nd Coy/AB got the order to come up with a program for two hours including lunch for the whole delegation, we knew

that we needed a lot of ideas to frame a pleasant stay for the President and Minister. We had two weeks to plan, prepare and organize all things which were needed for this high ranking visit.

The cooks of the coy decided about the menu and ideas were yielded how to decorate the dinning room for 30 people that the visitors would feel well. A challenge was the uniformity of the dishes, glasses and cutlery because our kitchen had not so many uniformity dishes. So the dishes were brought from the AIK (Austrian International Kitchen) and since not enough waiters were available, they were sent from the AOC (Austrian Officers' Club).

On 17th Dec 2008 at 10:15hrs the day had come. The delegation, headed by black Mercedes Limousines from SSAD (Senior Syrian Arab Delegate), followed by loud MP (military police) sirens and armoured vehicles, arrived at Posn 27 (2nd Coy Posn). Of course, the President was received with 'Guard of Honor' and DepCoyCdr LtI



Taking the salute in Camp FAOUAR

Armin Kaufmann reported. Then CoyCdr Maj Michael Fedl conducted a 'Hospital Roof Briefing'. This includes historical information about Quneitra during the war between Israel and Syria followed by a situational terrain briefing.

The weather was sunny but very windy which is quite normal for this region. Quneitra is located 1000m above sea level and was in earlier years a place for recreation and weekend excursion for wealthier Syrians.

The President seemed to be very impressed about the town's state of repair. The former 25.000 inhabitants counting areal, where now just a few houses remained, including the Hospital and Posn 27, which was used as a command post and communication centre during the war by the IDF (Israeli Defence Forces), does now not look like a 25.000 inhabitant counting town any more.

After the briefings 2nd Coy had the honour to invite both the President and the Minister with delegation to lunch at Posn 27. The dinning room was decorated festally under the responsibility of WO II Günther Weghofer, the SGM of the coy.

After the lunch President Dr. Fischer thanked 2nd Coy for the informative briefings and for their hospitality. He made pictures with soldiers as a memory, signed his photo, which is now hanging in the dining room, registered in the guest

book and left 2nd Coy in direction Damascus, where he met the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad.

Due to the prudence of the Position Leaders we could cope with this task and still observe the AOS



'Hospital Roof Briefing' in Quneitra

(Area of Separation) without problems. This visit was the highest recognition a company can get during a mission. Due to the assigning of all available soldiers to this event, it was a complete success for 2nd Coy and AUSBATT.

Article by Maj Michael Fedl, OiC 2nd Coy/AB Interpreted by Lt1 Alexander Pfnier, DO/AB Photos by Sgt Thomas Hatzl, Photographer/AB

High Delegation visit to 1st Coy

On 4th Nov 2008 Gen Roland Ertl, Chief of General Staff Austrian Armed Forces, accompanied by FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke, MGen Dieter Heidecker Deputy Officer in Command of the Austrian Joined Armed Forces and Escort Officers visited 1st Coy AUSBATT on Mount Hermon.

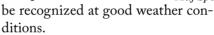
ertainly, General Ertl was received with military honors at Posn 12.

The OiC 1st Coy, Maj Oswald Spendier, introduced the Generals into the mandate of the 1st Coy in general and particularly into the current situation of the trench digging activities of SAAF (Syrian Arab Armed Forces) in the vicinity of B-Line.

After a short break the tour was continued up to Posn Hermon Hotel, the highest permanent manned UN Position worldwide (2814m above sea level), where the distinguished guests got a terrain briefing from PosnLdr SSgt Johannes Moser. After that the delegation continued their way to Posn Hermon South with nice weather and an excellent

view.

At Posn Hermon South the Generals got a briefing from PosLdr SSgt Willegger. The delegation was especially interested in the Lebanese-Israeli War in 2006 and the UNIFILnew Camps which can



At Posn Hermon Base lunch was prepared. General Ertl was enthused about the culinary deliciousness of the five-star position-cook MCpl Harald Findenig.

After having lunch, an AUS-BATT-Briefing was held by Commanding Officer LtCol Robert Glanner. The delegation was especially interested in the logistical support and preparations for the winter season. As nice surprise and result of this inspection the 1st Coy, three weeks later got two new treadmills and an ergo-meter. The 1st Coy of AUSBATT sincerely thanks General Mag. Roland Ertl and the accompanying Major Generals for the new sport equipment.

Article by Maj Oswald Spendier, OiC 1st Coy/AB Interpreted by Lt II Alexander Pfnier, DO/AB Photos by Sgt Thomas Hatzl, Photographer/AB



Maj Spendier briefs Gen Ertl at Posn 12



Gen Ertl greets the soldiers at Posn 12



Instruction at Posn Hermon Hotel



SSgt Willegger briefs at Posn Hermon South



Gen Ertl with delegation at Posn Hermon South

Change of Command LOGBATT

On Monday 22nd Oct 2007 took place the change of command ceremony where in the commanding officer and other appointments of 3rd rotation INDCON took over the charge from the commading officer and other appointments of 2nd rotation INDCON.

n 22nd Oct 2007 the Taking Over of Command Appointment (TOCA) ceremony of LOGBATT took place. Where in the Commanding Officer of INDCON 2nd rotation LtCol Manish Rai handed over his command to the Commanding Officer of LOGBATT 3rd rotation LtCol Kunwar Vijay Vir Singh. The parade was marched in by the Deputy Commanding Officer, LOGBATT Maj

Vijay Dalal. Honorable chief guests had arrived and the parade begun with the report to acting FC, COS Col Andrzej Ostrowski.

Then came in the Colours of

the Regiment with hand of allah, symbolising the blessings of god on all of us which was given the arms by the parade and salute by all the guests present. Then the outgoing CO LtCol Manish Rai summarised the whole activities of the battalion and gratefully thanked all who supported his team in accomplishing his tasks successfully. He thanked sincerely all his dear friends, HQ staff,

Branch Heads, his own staff and all the civilian personnel of UNDOF for their assistance, support and patience throughout his command.

At the end the outgoing CO LtCol Manish Rai gave a word of



Taking the salute by aFC, COS Col Andrzej Ostrowski

appreciation to all the Indian soldiers for their commitment and dedicated effort. He said because of the good work of Indian soldiers and support of other soldiers



Hand/Take Over documents being signed

of UNDOF the peace process in the region is still successfully continued and his subordinates can fly home safely and with a sense of accomplishment.

The main part of the ceremony

started with the handing over of the LOGBATT's standard to the new CO and signing the documents.

Then the new CO LtCol Kunwar Vijay Vir Singh thanked his predecessor for his good advise and useful information during the changing command period and assured that he and his team will do their best to fulfil the task of UNDOF keeping the Indian standards

The acting FC, COS Col Andrzej Ostrowski addressed the parade, where in he has given a word of appreciation to the outgo-

> ing contingent for their excellent work and special appreciation to the outgoing CO, LtCol Manish Rai. He also had given advise to the new contingent and wished the new CO, LtCol Kunwar Vijay Vir Singh the very best for his tenure.

At the end the regimental colors and the parade were marched out by Maj Ashish Pundhir, the new Adjutant. After the ceremony all guests

moved to the International Kitchen Ziouani for a grand lunch.

> Article by Capt Kranthi Kumar, CEO/LB Photos by LCpl Jai Prakash

DIWALI - Festival of Lights

The festival of Diwali has been celebrated for ages and the history of Diwali celebrations is as old as the history of India. Everyone on this festival enjoys the delicious Diwali sweets, the brightly lit Diwali Lamps and Diwali diyas, and the excitement for living that suddenly grips people around this time.

POEM OF 'DIWALI' -**DEDICATED TO UNDOF**

At the turn of the Indian New Year, the special festival 'Diwali' is here so we are proud to celebrate with Friends very rare, and are pleased to share! Our customs and traditions are centuries old but they have built a profound name around the world, where our traditions are still found buried well behind the fame!

'Diwali', the festival of lights, illuminates the darkness of the New Year's moon and strengthens our close friendships and knowledge with a self-realization soon! So the 'Diwali' day of Indians is a big celebration to respect the sacred time and reminds our heritage in Golan, while echoed through the winds' chime!

This adopted land of ours has been built by the sweat and toil of many, many immigrants, past and present, on this blessed soil! Here we feel the values of freedom. voice and assurance as well that Golan is the 'Place' where our future is going to dwell! So, let's rejuvenate our diversity today because we are too happy to tell about the real joy of a big celebration that is now ringing the bell! And let us all hope, the pride of our 'Diwali' festival, although was born in the past will illuminate the stars on United Nations' flag, to signify harmony, and surely it will last!!

D ut the festival of Diwali symbolizes much more than these things. There have been so many important legends associated with the occasion of Diwali that five days have been accredited for the celebration of Diwali in India with each day holding importance of its own. The most famous legend associated with the story of Diwali is the return of Lord Ram to Ayodhya.

At a metaphysical level, Deepawali is a festival signifying the victory of good over evil; the latter is destroyed and reduced to ashes by fireworks is the belief of the people. This festival is celebrated on a grand scale in almost all the regions of India. In fact the festival of Diwali is regarded to bring the supernatural joy and brightness in a person's life with the hope of discovering light amidst darkness, achieving happiness in place of ignorance and spreading of love amidst hatred and violence.

> Article by Capt Kranthi Kumar, CEO/LB Photos by LCpl Deepak Moore



The 'Bhangra' troop with FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke and the CO/LB, LtCol Kunwar Vijay Vir Singh

TINIDO IF Photography Contest 2007

The UNDOF PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST 2007 was initiated started by the COS, Col Andrzej Ostrowski, in the spring of 2007.

The initial launch of this contest did not generate a high level of interest or participation. Through continued efforts by the Welfare Section and support by UNDOF leadership at all levels in autumn of 2007 more than 500 photos where submitted that would be reviewed and chosen for the final stages of the contest. A jury was selected which consisted of a delegate from each troop contributing country and two persons from the UNDOF HQ. The jury's task was to select winning photos from the five following categories:

• Operational • Scenery • People • Miscellaneous and • Flora and Fauna. A sixth category was added (• Extra Class) at the last minute to include a "Dog" category considering that there were numerous photos of dogs. The jury selected their five favourite photos from each category. Of these five photos the winning top three of each category were selected. In addition to prizes being awarded to the top three photos of each category a letter of appreciation, signed by the Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke and the COS Col Andrzej Ostrowski, was presented to each winning photographer. The prizes awarded were attractive items purchased from the 'Camp Faouar PX'. Thanks again to all UNDOF members who participated in this photography contest.

Article by Capt Hermann J. Altmanninger, SOPR









Polish soldiers after marches

Every year in spring and autumn the Austrian battalion (AUSBATT) and the Polish battalion (POLBATT) arrange marches for all willing people. The marches lead the participants through the patrol paths in the area of responsibility (AOR).

📶 any Polish soldiers par-**V**⊥ticipate in marches. Why? It is not too easy to go long hours in difficult terrain!

"The purpose of marches is introducing all personnel and soldiers with patrol paths and give them the possibility of getting knowledge about hard work and obstacles on the route of marches during patrols in that area. It is not a championship but a lot of participants treat marches

as a competition and they want to be the winners on the finish! About 150 Polish soldiers took part in marches this autumn! 19 Poles received diplomas for participation in all marches" - said CO/PB LtCol Jerzy Sulima. The distance was 111km long with altitude from 2814m above sea level to -47m below sea level. "It is more then the highest tops of Polish Mountains like Giewont or Rysy in the Tatra Mountains!" - affirmed proudly Lt Paweł Zdziarek. It is included from four marches: AUSBATT, Wadi, Coyote and Scorpion. The AUSBATT-march in the Austrian AOR is divided into two following days. The first easier phase leads from Quneitra Posn 27 to Posn 10. The length of the route is 21km. The second phase of 24km is a huge challenge. The end of the march is at Posn Hermon Hotel situated on an altitude of 2814m above sea-level.

Wadi, Coyote and Scorpion marches are in the Polish AOR. The hardest is the Wadi-Patrol. Only very tough and sporty persons are able to cover it and getting finish of the Wadi march. Among the participants were representatives of the



Wadi patrol - a big challenge for tough soldiers

UNDOF Headquarters, the Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke and COS UNDOF Col Andrzej Ostrowski. Alongside them, there attended also representatives from AUSBATT, POLBATT, SLOV-CON, INDCON and J-CON. Also members of several Embassies in Damascus and members of civilian personnel of UNDOF took part in the marches. "Each start was not optimistic! The signs of war, ruins but nobody lost hope!" At the end of one of the marches WO Paweł Kalinowski described the situation.

"The March has been started! Route was among rocks, stones and minefields. The weapons and backpacks became heavier, more and more. The sweat, burning sun over the head and we had about 15 kilometres to finish!"commented Pte Grzegorz Nojman. "There was a moment for the rest organizers made checkpoints with beverages, fruits and refreshments. After few minutes of rest the participants went ahead. The first were Austrians. Poles were close to them. These Austrian mountain-men are very tough! They didn't stop even for a moment!" - said Pte Paweł Zadworny.

"The last five kilometres and you could see the finish of the march. After the marches you were able only to take a shower, eating supper and go directly to bed. You were so tired. Some of the teams completely resigned to continue because of health problems. But the majority of the participants achieved to finish the marches. Picturesque scenery, beautiful landscapes and environs high mountains will stay

in my mind forever." - mentioned Pte Damian Wójcik. "During the Marches clouds surrounded us, few minutes later clouds were under our legs!" - was mentioned by Maj Piotr Suchan. 100 metres before the finish you could hear the song: 'We are the champions'.

"You were really tired but very happy!" - said Capt Jan Zorena. "I am sure I can always bank on the help of other friends from the team" - after the march commented Maj Adam Sciechowicz. Some participants claim "never again" but another for example Capt Jacek Łukasik wants to take part in all marches and runs during his mission.

"Every participant who finished all of the marches was awarded with the certificate and March Badge. But most significant were lessons of cooperation and devotion of the team members." - was stated by COS/PB Maj Krzysztof Kochański.

Now we are waiting for the spring marches in the AOR.

Article by Capt Sylwester Wlaszczyk, PressO/PB Photo by Capt Jan Zorena

Charity in Khan Arnabah

The Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Syria Mr. Jacek Chodorowicz said that it is very big pleasure to see smiles on the children faces. It was on the celebration of handover nineteen wheelchairs to the disabled children from Khan Arnabah in Syria.



Smiles on the children faces - brought by Polish soldiers

he Embassy of The Republic of Poland paid for the wheelchairs from their budget. Polish soldiers arranged everything concerning the event. They had bought wheelchairs, transported and assembled them. CO/PB LtCol Jerzy Sulima was organizing the charity event and he cooperated with the First Secretary of The Polish Embassy Mrs. Justyna Porazińska. She is responsible for charity activities. Further LtCol Sulima ensured, that Polish soldiers will support the owners of wheelchairs with service if technical problem.

Moreover all soldiers from Polish Military Contingent presented the children huge number of sweets, drinks and small gifts. We know that Syrian people, especially children's life is not so easy. All children were very happy when they had got a lot of presents. Polish representatives took part in the ceremony of handover the wheelchairs. They were commiserated to the disabled children. Soldiers were touched because of the misery of the small kids. At the ceremony the Syrian TV, representatives of the local government, the SSAD (Senior Syrian Arab Delegate) and families participated.

Chief of Staff UNDOF Col Andrzej Ostrowski said thank you to the Polish Military Contingent for organization of this charity event. We promised that we will arrange the next charity days during 'The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity' in January. It is very famous and popular in Poland and Europe. We are on a peace mission and it should be our obligation to give joy to other people if we really want to be peacekeepers!

> Article and Photos by Capt Sylwester Wlaszczyk, PressO/PB



Handing over wheelchairs to the disabled children

SISU Transportation

The aim of this article is to introduce the SISU transportation task to the Patria company in Lebanon, which is one of J-CON mission duties.



Three Brave soldier transporting a SISU

e can do the most of the SISU maintenance by ourselves in the maintenance shop in UNDOF. However, we transport SISU to the Patria company maintenance factory in Lebanon since only they are able to do some of the specific maintenance requirements. The Patria company has good-skilled engineers, many spare parts and excellent tools available. The Patria company maintenance factory nearest to UNDOF is in UNIFIL, Lebanon.

J-CON has the trailer able to carry SISU. Therefore, it is our responsibility to transport SISUs to Lebanon. There are two routes to Lebanon. One is the route from Israel to Lebanon, and the second is the route from Syria to Lebanon. The road condition from Israel to Lebanon is good. However, we must undergo long inspections going in and out of Lebanon.

As for the Syrian route, we enjoy an easy inspection compared to the Israeli route, but we are escorted by the Lebanese army from Syria to

Lebanon. Moreover, there are many traffic delays due to construction and road conditions in Lebanon in a lot of places. It is said that these problems were caused during the Israeli/Lebanese war in 2006.

Before departing to Lebanon, we confirm the route by open source information analysis, satellite photographs and then we make a plan of transportation. We establish the command post in J-CON, and do the command activity for the SISU transportation. Moreover we prepare bulletproof vests and helmet against IED (Improvised Explosive Device). We always prepare thoroughly and secure our safety. However, a delicate and dangerous domestic situation in Lebanon frequently disturbs our duty. Upon arrival, members of Patria maintenance factory in Posn 9-10, UNIFIL are very kind, and we are always welcomed. They give us various useful advices. J-CON enjoy a good relationship with them and other members of UNFIL in Nagoura.

It is our sincere wish that this region will enjoy peace and stability as soon as possible. Hopefully in the future, all roads between these neighboring countries will be open and safe.

> Article by Capt Tokuya Saisako. DetCdr/J-CON Photos by SSqt Hideo Funakoshi and Maj Ryuji Koga



J-CON with UNIFIL members in Nagoura

Volunteer visit to children's facilities

J-CON believes that constructing mutual understanding and cooperation with a host country is very important. The local residents' cooperation is indispensable for the success of the United Nations Peace Keeping Operation.



'Habatan' with members of Afula HA'EMEK Hospital

n ecently J-CON conducted a volunteer visit to children's facilities on both A-Side and B-Side. The Hyogo Prefecture Governor in Japan (where our division is located) sent a donation of toys to children in Israel and Syria.

On 21st Oct 2007, members of J-CON visited the Children's Cancer Ward at the Afula HA'EMEK Hospital in Israel. Toys were distributed to the hospitalized children and their families by the popular Japanese stuffed animal character 'Habatan'.

This hospital is known and recognized for its dedication to Israeli Jewish & Arab coexistence through medicine. Both Iewish and Arab children lay side by side in the cancer ward.

On B-Side we visited the Palestinian refugee camp near Damascus and distributed souvenirs to the children on 7th Nov 2007. Afterwards,



'Habatan' with Palestinian refugee Children

we spoke to the Palestinian refugee representatives and exchanged opinions. 'Habatan' played a very important role in this visit.

On both sides of the cease-fire line, 'Habatan' was able to engage with children and he was very popular! In Japan, 'Habatan' is a phoenix that encouraged national revival from the giant earthquake that occurred in Hyogo Prefecture in

Japan in 1995.

'Habatan' did a splendid service for this activity. Our purpose in these visits was to encourage cooperation with the two host countries through the service and donation to less fortunate children. We hope to continue such activities in the future.

Our wish is that someday soon, the children from both sides of the border will live in peace, health and security.

> Article by Lt1 Takahiro Shibukawa, PressO/J-CON Photos by WO Tetsuji Kinjo SGM/J-CON



Change of command





Slovak Ambassador taking the salute

The handover/takeover ceremony

fter the rotation of Austrian and Slovakian soldiers in November LtCol Jozef Figura was assigned as probably our last new National Contingent Commander of SLOVCON/Deputy Commanding Officer AUSBATT.

The 30th Nov 2007 was a significant day for The Slovak Contingent - SLOVCON.

On this day the 20th and probably last handover/takeover of the **SLOVCON** commander place on the AUSBATT parade square due to rotation of our soldiers in November. 50 members of the 95 soldiers of SLOVCON were relieved in this rotation.

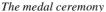
What are his main goals? Firstly, continuation of the good cooperation and relationship with Austrian, polish and other colleagues who work shoulder to shoulder here on Golan Heights.

Secondly, continuation and improvement of SLOVCON preparedness for dealing with difficult tasks and duties in the mission.

Finally, prepare SLOVCON area of responsibility for handover/takeover to the following contingent. And what are his first impressions? LtCol Figura said that he is very pleased about the really nice welcome in UNDOF. He has already found here many new friends and he believes that his perfect impressions stay perfect for all time of his stay here.

> Article by Capt Roman Bobal, OiC 3rd Coy/AB Photos by LTI Radoslav Olah, SuppO/SLOVCON







Marching out of the parade

News from Military Police Platoon UNDOF

The MP Platoon continued its endeavour for better policing during the last guarter. Enormous efforts were laid on meaningful training to enhance the professional standards and better integration.

he new Indian rotation in October 2007 introduced some fresh faces in the team. WO II Urban Schmidhofer joined our team.

WOII Urban replaced WOII Michael Spoerer as the new Leader of the A-Detachment.

MSgt Juraj Ruchika became the new Slovakian patrolman in B-Detachment.

MSgt Josef Mesiarkin bid us goodbye.

A comprehensive training schedule for the newcomers assisted them to understand the environment. assimilate there tasks and settles down smoothly.

Firing skills of all available MP's were tested on the range in November. Periodic training activities on Military Police Instructions, procedure, reports, investigations and



Traffic accident investigation in Damascus



Honing our firing skills at Camp Ziouani shooting range

participation in various exercises kept us on the go.

Special emphasis was given to personal behaviour and conduct of MP's.

Numerous visits of VVIPs and VIPs and routine business kept us occupied in the latter half of the quarter.

We take this opportunity to wish all members of UNDOF a stupendous 2008.

> Article by Maj Siddartha S. Rathore, DFPM Photos by MSgt Juray Ruchika and WOII Gernot Payer, Force Photographer

Medal parade in the OGG-D ISMAC-House

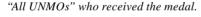
n 7th Dec 2007 a Medal Parade chaired by the Chief of Staff UNTSO, MGen Ian Gordon was held in the OGG-D ISMAC-House in Damascus. The ceremony was also attended by Force Commander UNDOF, MGen Wolfgang Jilke, other high ranking dignities,

station staff and non-UN guests.

The ceremony started with the presentation and award of the UNTSO-Medal to observer officers who had already completed a 90 days tour of duty within UNTSO. A total of 18 officers from Observer Group Lebanon, Damascus and Tiberias, as well as some staff officers from UNTSO HQ in Jerusalem, received the medal.

> Article by Capt Ronald Oliver, MIO OGG Photos by Maj Frederic Levesque, DC OGG-D







MGen Ian Gordon, COS UNTSO

Cooperation between UNDOF and OGG during a major exercise

uring the annual inspection by the Chief of Staff UNTSO, MGen Ian Gordon, from the 19th to the 22nd November 2007, members of Observer Group Golan (OGG) conducted different kinds of exercises with the cooperation of UNDOF (United Nations

Disengagement Observer Force).

The main aim of that training period was to test the reactions of UNMOs (United Nations Military Observers) dealing with the different situations, to test the procedures



'Exe-Demonstration' near the Observation

and the chain of resources provided by OGG HQ and UNDOF and to evaluate the need in training for the future.

A large panel of screenplays has been imagined to make the training realistic such as infringement of the agreement demonstration near Observation Posts (OP's) in A - Side and B - Side, damaged vehicle found in a minefield, lost vehicle...

As a result it is assessed that the coopertion between OGG and UNDOF is efficient and was success-

ful during the whole period especially between RRP (Ready Reaction Patrol) and line UNMOs.

> Article by Capt Ronald Oliver. MIO OGG

'Daily duties away, Austria invites to stay!'

This representative slogan carries the message for the celebration of the Austrian National Day on the 26th of October, at Camp Faouar in Syria.



Goodies from Austria

ike in the years before Aus-⊿trian Blue Helmets presented their country, their mentality and Austrian efforts within UNDOF to their international comrades.

Exactly at 1500 hrs LT the arrival signal sounded across the parade square. During a solemn and worthy medal parade 150 Austrian and Slovak soldiers received their UNDOF Medal. The Master of Ceremony was AUSBATT's Chief Operations Officer, Maj Harald Gell.

More than 100 VIPs mostly of the diplomatic corps from Damascus honoured the efforts of the Austrian and Slovakian soldiers with their presence.

After asking for further orders to the Chief of Staff, Col Andrzej Ostrowski, the soldiers marched past the tribune of honour. After the troops having marched out, the comfortable part of the day began.

Welfare City, the area around the Austrian International Kitchen was transformed into a 'little Austria' by countless busy hands. Inside

the entrance tent a welcome drink was presented to each guest. The cups for the drinks were decorated with an Austrian label and even the camouflage net above the guests

was pimped with an Austrian Flag.

At 1620 hrs LT the party in Welfare City started. Everybody, vakians, Japanese, Polish, Indian and soldiers of several other countries wanted to catch a piece of Austrian culture.

The evening was

started by a first class dinner. Typical Austrian dishes, ice cream, cakes and scrambled pancake called 'Palatschinke'. The three federal states – Carinthia, Upper Austria and Salzburg - were presented and offered an insight to their cultural and culinary life. Later on, the highlight of the evening, the Austrian Band

from Styria "Lohnsperch-Roffler" played a concert. The audience was carried away by the "Styrian Blues". In addition several promotion videos were presented by 'Österreich-Werbung', Austria's Tourism Agency.

For those who were not satisfied yet, there was a raffle and even a 'Stockschießen' tournament (curling on tar bitumen concrete).

The atmosphere was relaxed and one could see that all guests enjoyed the party.

After all, we Austrians can be proud of our country! Nobody expected such a big event and such positive echo from the visitors.

It was a lot of work to organize this celebration, but even a party of this magnitude can never substitute the real Austria. As a conclusion you might use the words of our famous



The Austrian Band "Lonsperch Roffler"

singer Reinhard Fendrich who sings from the bottom of his heard:

'I am from Austria!!'

Article by WOII Erwin Michels, CCSL-HQCoy/AB Interpreted by Lt I Alexander Pfnier, DO/AB Photos by Sgt Thomas Hatzl, Photographer/AB

Wreath-Laying-Ceremony in Jerusalem

It was on Sunday, 25th Nov 2007, when the Austrian Black Cross (war grave care) under leadership of Col Wolfgang Wildberger, former COO UNDOF, realized a wreath-layingceremony at the 'Mount of Olives'-Cemetery in Jerusalem.





FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke adjusting 'his' wreath

Col Wildberger from the Austrian Black Cross

bout 90 years ago, LCpl Nissim Behmoiras, an interpreter from World War I, who fought for the Austrian-Hungarian troops against Great Britain, was killed in action by a British bullet in 1917. His grave on the 3000 year old Mount of Olives-Cemetery in Jerusalem was only found recently and LtCol Larry Blum, CO A-Gate and Liasion Officer to UNDOF, identified the grave with the Hebrew inscriptions.

Having learned about this, the Austrian Black Cross initiated a wreath laying ceremony for this very grave and arranged a get-together with the Israeli Ambassador to Jordan, the Chargé d'Affaires of the Austrian Embassy in Tel Aviv, Mr. Norbert Hack, the Hungarian Military Attaché, LtCol Blum, an UNDOF-delegation, consisting of 10 soldiers, and last but not least our Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke with his MA Maj Dwayne Lovegrove.

The uncommon ceremony itself lasted for about 30 minutes and speeches were given by MGen Jilke, Col Wildberger and Mr. Hack, who demanded to "give peace a chance and not to let armed conflict claim the lives of so many young people". LtCol Blum said the traditional Jewish prayer 'El Male Rahamim' (God, be full of mercy) until three wreaths were laid by Mr. Hack, the

Hungarian Military Attaché and our FC.

Col Wildberger expressed his sincere thanks to everyone participating in this ceremony and invited to a typical Austrian meal in the Austrian Hospice in Jerusalem.

Article by Capt Stefan Zaiser, SO-Trng Photos by Sgt Alexander Carli, FC-Driver



After the ceremony at the 'Mount of Olives'-Cemetery

'Peace Light' from Bethlehem

The 'Peace Light' dissemination is a custom, that Upper Austria (a province in Austria) came up with to create a peace symbol for the supporters of the charity campaign 'Licht ins Dunkel' (Light into Darkness). This campaign is repeated every year now to support all sorts of unfortunate individuals.



Dr. Josef Pühringer and Dr. Helmut Obermayer with ten Upper Austrians

Cince 1986, Dr. Helmut Obermayer, an Upper Austrian and Chief of the Upper Austrian Broadcasting Station conducts a trip each vear in late November to collect the so called 'Peace Light' in the 'Church of the Nativity' in Beth-

lehem. Just below this very church - in the birth grotto, according to the Christian folk tradition, Jesus Christ was born.

The Upper Austrian Provincial Government chooses a worthy child to light the candle in a lantern

and to spread this 'Peace Light' all over Europe. In 2007, 10-year-old Elisabeth Nemec was chosen for saving her mother's life. Along-Elisabeth. 380 pilgrims were joining her.

UNDOF sent a delegation of ten Upper Austrians, that is Capt Stefan Zaiser,

Capt Hermann Altmanninger, WO Engelbert Hager, Sgt Michael Bitto, Sgt Gunter Mayr, MCpl Johann Appenzeller, MCpl Wolfgang Weickinger, Cpl Christian Bräuer, Cpl Stefan Minichshofer, and Cpl Dietmar Würzlhuber to Jerusalem to meet with the participants of this journey, with the coordinator Dr. Obermayer, with the Upper Austrian Federal Governor Dr. Josef Pühringer, and of course with Elisabeth to receive the 'Peace Light' and to disseminate it within UNDOF.

On 26th Nov 2007 a reception was held in the Austrian Hospice in Ierusalem and at about 21:00hrs the Federal Governor himself handed over the 'Peace Light' to WO Engelbert Hager, our eldest delegation member.

After the official part, UNDOF's delegation members sat together with their Federal Governor to enjoy the buffet and the rest of the evening.

The next day two lit lanterns were brought the whole way from Jerusalem to Camp Faouar and handed over to our Padre Leszek Ryzka, who kept the Peace Light burning until Christmas. Supposedly, all Advent wreaths and Christmas trees in UNDOF were lit with the Peace Light.

Governor Pühringer handing over the 'Peace Light' to UNDOF

Article by Capt Stefan Zaiser, SO-Trng Photos by Heinz Kraml, Photographer Goverment Press, Upper Austria

