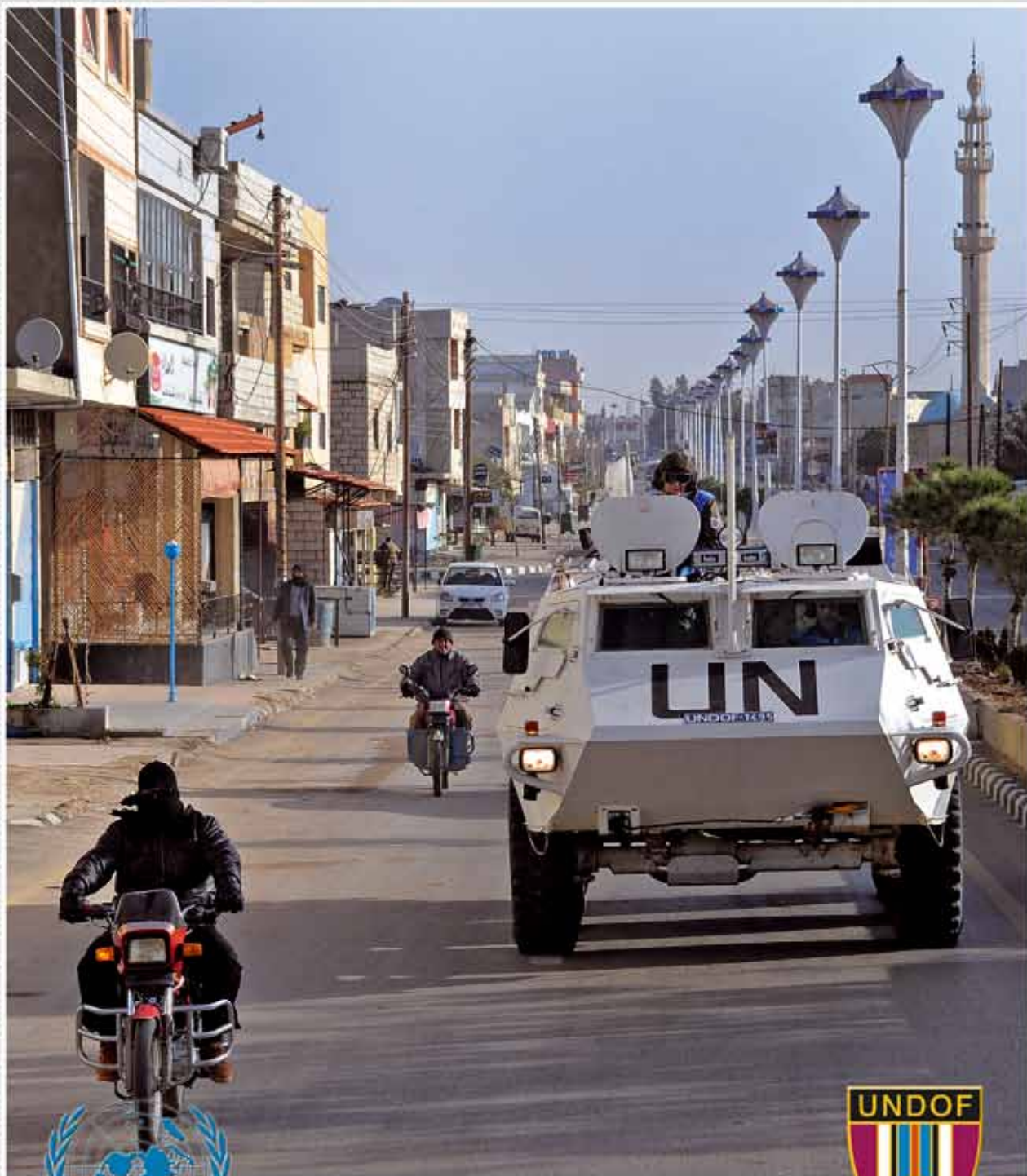


GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



October - December 2010
No. 125



DEAR READER!



In the international environment time is going quick and Maj Karl Curin handed over his responsibilities to me. Although not a newcomer to

UNDOF the task of producing such a high-quality journal is a real challenge. New to the team as well is WO I Wolfgang Grebien, a professional photographer. We will try to fit into the footprints of Karl and Arnold and wish them good luck.

Edition 125 means 30 years of age to the Golan Journal. We will not elaborate on that jubilee but present you with topics of interest to UNDOF, changes within its community and pictures you not only have a quick view on but want to pin on the wall. To the outgoing UNDOF personnel we say "Good bye and don't forget your friends in UNDOF", the newcomers we warmly welcome and wish them all the best to perform their tasks on behalf of UNDOF.

Quite a bit of information is packed into this journals copy as well – Ambassadors and Military Attachés visited UNDOF, the UNDOF Ultimate Challenge,



Our team: Wolfgang, Muneyuki, Stefan and Gerold

the ongoing "Barreling Project" and news from the contributing nations. Enjoy browsing and reading the 125th edition and don't hesitate to tell us your opinion. There is always room for improvements.

The new editorial team wishes all the UNDOF Golan Journal readers a prosperous and Happy New Year 2011.

Yours sincerely,
Maj Stefan Eder, SOPR

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Front (Page 1): UN Patrol passing through Khan Arnabah
Photo by WO I Wolfgang Grebien

Back (Page 24): The Orthodox Church of Qunaitra on Christmas Eve
Photo by WO I Wolfgang Grebien

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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 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 Warrior Peacekeepers!

Happy New Year! 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 Jews alike, this time of the 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 1973 Disengagement Agreement and reaffirmed by our UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, in December 2010. 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 focusing 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 our patrols and procedures with the Military Observers of Observer Group Golan. OGG is our eyes and ears outside of the AOS and together we have formed a very effective team. This is a success story that I intend to keep running effectively.

Changes are being implemented within UNDOF. We are awaiting the delivery of a limited number of new RG-32M Armoured Patrol Vehicles, which will replace the aged M113 APC fleet. Together with our SISU fleet, these vehicles will improve our effectiveness along with the safety of our personnel. I held a leadership "retreat" in late November of 2010 and the issues and recommendations that came out of that symposium are being considered now and many of the recommendations will be put into place in 2011. It is my intent to improve the morale and welfare of our personnel in order to have a more cohesive and effective UNDOF team.

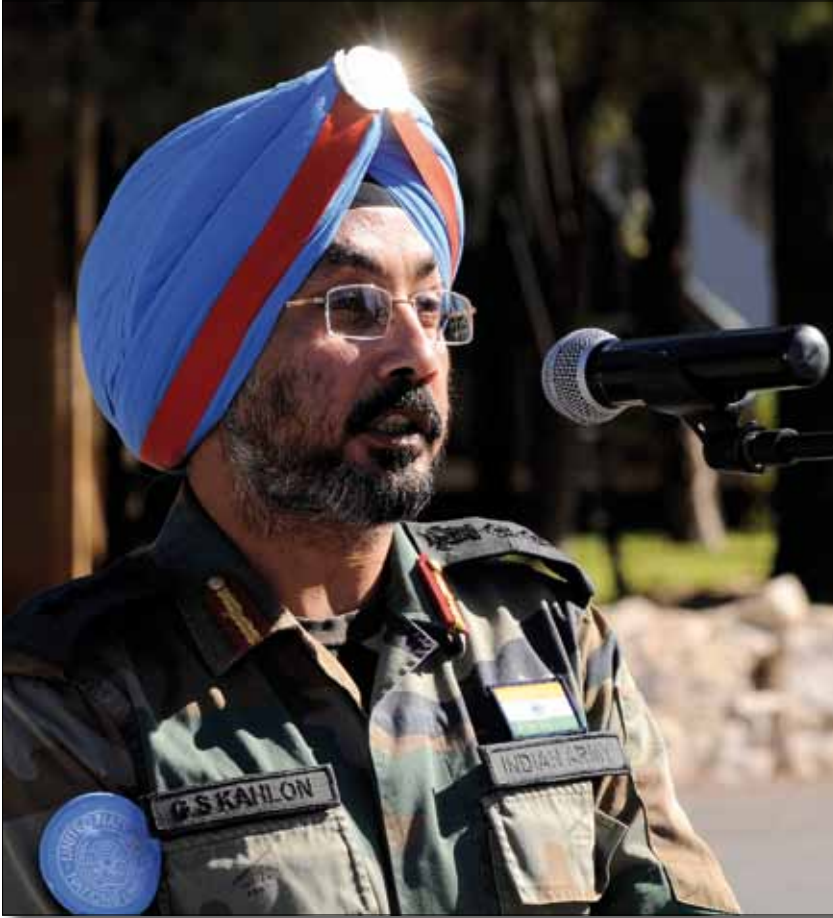
There are many tasks which have been started but have yet to bear fruit, and issues that will require a concerted effort from many people to resolve and complete. I seek your continued cooperation and professionalism in addressing the challenges ahead. Motivated by our common desire to achieve our Mission's 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, Danke, Salamat, Dhanyavad, Vhalla, Arigato, etc etc!

Major General Natalio C. Ecarma III
Force Commander UNDOF

Chief of Staff Words



Time has gone by at a very rapid pace as I enter into the last month of my tenure here. The mountain tops are already awash with the first heavy snowfall of the season and the chill is here to remind everyone that we are in the midst of winters. It is time to reflect over the events of the year that has whizzed past rapidly and shape the contours of things to focus upon in the times to come. One year seems to be too short a time to implement changes and strive for improvement but some outcomes in the form of intangibles can only be discerned with a keen eye for detail. UNDOF is constantly evolving and improving in its own traditional way and the old order is gradually yielding place to the new.

There has been a renewed focus

on the senior management and how it should transcend down to all levels ultimately translating itself into good governance and efficient management. A lot of issues have been the focus of debate and attention and those which are of merit are being implemented. This dynamism and change in UNDOF is neither evolutionary nor revolutionary but more of a participative, top down and bottom up change. The entire process will take some time to fructify and things will gradually fall into place as 2011 is ushered in with hopes of a better tomorrow and a more effective and efficient UNDOF in the Golan Heights.

The geopolitical landscape seems to have stagnated for the time being with no new fabric being worked

upon but this should not lull us all into complacency. The subtle undercurrents must be taken notice of and we should feel the pulse of the situation very closely. Majority of the troops have undergone a change hence all the more reason for everyone to be extra cautious and vigilant in the performance of duties related to the mandate. The relations with both host nations are pivotal to the success of UNDOF and how effective it is in ensuring that the agreement is not violated. There is a need for greater situational awareness on part of all personnel and the onus largely lies with the experienced veterans in the mission that this knowledge is retained and shared extensively.

As the time comes to bid goodbye to the excellent colleagues at UNDOF all I can confess is that I have enjoyed every moment here both professionally and personally in large measure due to the good camaraderie and the unstinted support extended by one and all. I must express my special thanks to the branch heads who have toiled day in night out to make things happen. Last of all I am extremely grateful to the FC for reposing so much faith in me and giving me the freedom to do my job. I wish you all the very best in all your future endeavours. God speed and good luck. Adieu!

Best Wishes

*Col Gurvir Singh Kahlon
Chief of Staff UNDOF*

Visits to UNDOF

by Capt Muneyuki Yatsuo, DMPIO



H.E. Mr. David Satterfield, the Director General of the Multinational Force of Observers, USA, visited Camp Ziouani and met with FC UNDOF (5th October 2010)



H.E. Mr. Omar Onohon - Turkish Ambassador, MGen Alberto Asarta - FC UNIFIL and MGen Robert Mood - COS UNTSO visited Camp Faouar to attend the regional FC's Conference (15th-16th October 2010)



LtGen Günter Höfler, Commander of Austrian Armed Force, visited Camp Faouar and AUSBATT Positions (9th-12th November 2010)



LtGen Babacar Gaye, Military Adviser, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, visited UN positions and met with FC UNDOF (14th-16th November 2010)



LtGen Othmar Commenda, Deputy Chief of Staff of Austrian Armed Forces, visited Camp Faouar, AUSBATT positions and met with FC UNDOF (12th-14th December 2010)

• MGen Berndt Grundevik, Commander Land Component Command, Sweden, visited Camp Faouar and OP 71 and met with COS UNDOF (4th October 2010)

• H.E. Mr. Michael Rendi, Austrian Ambassador in Israel, visited Position 22 (22nd November 2010)

• H.E. Mr. Eric Chevallier, French Ambassador in Syria, visited Camp Faouar, PHILBATT Positions and met with FC UNDOF (29th November 2010)

• MGen Kizuku Fukuda, Vice Commanding General of the 4th Division JGSDF, visited Camp Faouar, AUSBATT and PHILBATT Area and met with FC UNDOF (13th-16th December 2010)

• H.E. Mr. Christophe Bigot, French Ambassador in Israel, visited Camp Ziouani and OP 51 and met with FC UNDOF (14th December 2010)



The new Chief of Staff (COS)

Col (GS) Martin Dorfer was born on 14th February 1967 in Judenburg, Austria. He is an experienced peacekeeper having served with SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1997 and as an UNMO with UNTSO in 1999. He started his military career 1985 and graduated in 1990 from the Military Academy as an infantry officer. Within others he attended the NATO Staff Officers Course at NATO School Oberammergau/GER. He completed the UN Senior Staff Officers Course, attended the General Staff and Command Studies in Vienna, the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk/USA and the European Security and Defence College in Belgium. Col Dorfer holds a Master Degree in International Politics and Security Management of the Vienna University. Before being appointed as the COS UNDOF, Col Dorfer held assignments as a company commander, instructor of the Academic Battalion of the Military Academy, COO of the 1st Infantry Brigade, coordinator Strategic Leadership Course at the Austrian National Defence Academy, COS & D/CO of the 1st Infantry Brigade, COS & D/CO of the Austrian Land Forces School and finally he headed Department 4, Defence Staff Division of the Ministry of Defence. Col Dorfer is married to Gabriele and they have three sons - Thomas (18), Markus (14) and David (4). Besides his family he enjoys traveling, reading and keeps himself in good shape with running and mountain-biking.



The New Chief of Integrated Support Services (CISS)

Mr. Gerard Buckley was born on 07th June 1962 in Cork, Ireland. He joined the United Nations on 22 November 1984 and he has worked directly in support of United Nations Peace Operations ever since. Over the years Mr. Buckley has performed numerous functions, including: engineering, administrative, supply, logistics and contract, project and program management - often in very complex and demanding situations. He has a background in engineering and he holds a Bachelor of Science Degree (B.Sc. Hons) in Business Administration. He is an individual who enjoys challenges, which demand creative thinking and he has a natural and proven ability to provide leadership, particularly where success is measured through timely action and rational decision-making. Mr. Buckley has consistently advanced to higher levels of responsibility and he excels in challenging and demanding situations. Prior to joining the United Nations Mr. Buckley completed 6 years of service with the Irish Defence Forces, which included a tour of duty with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Mr. Buckley is married to Teresa and they have two children, a son, Micheal (24) and a daughter, Niamh (22). His hobbies include reading and he enjoys all kinds of sport.



The new CO/PHILBATT

LtCol Sanny L. Gadot was born on 23rd June 1957 in Buenavista, Guimaras, Philippines. He joined the Philippine Army in 1979 and graduated from the Military Academy in 1983. He holds a Masters Degree in National Security Administration from the National Defense College and Masters in Business Management Administration from the University of the Philippines. He has attended various military schoolings such as the Comprehensive Crisis Management Course from Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies in Hawaii/USA, Overseas Joint Warfare Course in Australia, Command and General Staff Course, Infantry Officer Course, Special Forces Operations Course, Basic Airborne Course and Scout Ranger Course. He held numerous command and staff positions including COS 2nd Infantry Division, D/CO 202nd Infantry Brigade, CO 48th Infantry Battalion and 34th Infantry Battalion respectively and had been a commander of the Scout Ranger units. He is also a seasoned operation, training and logistic officer. His latest designation prior to his UN posting was Deputy Chief, Army Internal Audit. In recognition of his twenty-seven year active military career, LtCol Gadot was a recipient of the Commanding General, Philippine Army Award, Distinguished Service Star, Bronze Cross, Gawad sa Kaunlaran, numerous Military Merit Medals and Commendation Medals. He is married to Josephine Duque-Gadot and has two children – Sarena Joyce and Joshua San.



The new DCO AUSBATT/NCC HRVCON

Maj Denis Vuković was born on 13th March 1967, in Split, Croatia. He joined the Croatian Army in 1991 in the beginning of Croatian Homeland War. Starting his military carrier as an infantryman, he held a variety of duties during the war. In 1992 he was promoted to Lt I. and posted to battalion HQ as S1 and PR. For his participation in many battles during the Homeland War he was awarded with the “Order of the Croatian Trefoil” for special merits, “Order of the Croatian Wattle”, “Commemorative Medal of the Homeland War”, “Commemorative Medal of the Homeland’s Gratitude”, “Medal for Participation in Operation Summer '95” and the “Medal for Participation in Operation Storm”.

After the war he graduated from the Military Basic and Military Advanced Officer's School in Zagreb as well as from the University of Zagreb and became a professor. He finished many different courses in Croatia, USA, BiH, Austria, Afghanistan and Germany. Maj Vuković took part in many international excersises.

During 2006 he was deployed with the first Croatian Observation Mobile Liasion Team as an instructor to a battalion HQ of the Afghanistan National Army. With OMLT he was deployed in North Afghanistan in Masar-E-Sharif and later to the region of Kandahar in the south. For this NATO mission he was awarded with the “ISAF” medal. In 2008 he was promoted to Major and posted as chief of CIMIC section in the HQ of the Guard Motorized Brigade. He is married to Maja, and they have five children.



The new Deputy Chief of Integrated Support Services (D/CISS)

LtCol R Krishnan was born on 09th April 1971 at Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. He was commissioned into the Army Ordnance Corps on 10th Dec 1994. He graduated from the University of Delhi with a Bachelor of Commerce (Honors) degree. In addition to his mandatory military courses, he has qualified from the prestigious Defense Services Staff College, Wellington.

LtCol R Krishnan has served as an Infantry Company Commander in an active counter insurgency operational area. He had two stints with the Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Battalions (Infantry Division and Armored Brigade) wherein he was responsible for effective inventory management. He has been an instructor at the College of Materials Management, Jabalpur,

India. He has also been the Assistant Quartermaster General (AQMG) of an Infantry Division deployed in counter insurgency area. He had the distinction of commanding an Ordnance Maintenance Company of a Strike Corps.

LtCol R Krishnan is married to Maj Benor (ret.) and they are blessed with two daughters, Parinika and Amruta. He is a keen adventurer and likes travelling and listening to music.



The new Chief Transport Officer (CTO)

Peter De Vlught was born on 27th April 1959 in the Caribbean twin island state of Trinidad and Tobago. He joined the United Nations in September 1989 as a Field Service Officer attached to ground Transport Operations and has steadily moved ahead to his current posting as Chief Transport Officer. Having served with nine different Peace Keeping Operations (Middle East, Europe and Africa) in all Transport persuasions, FSO De Vlught brings with him a wealth of field experience and institutional knowledge of the UN system. His last appointment prior to UNDOF was as the Deputy Chief Transport Officer with the ONUCI mission in Ivory Coast.

Peter has successfully completed courses in Managing Technical Professionals (2000), Transport Management for the United Nations (2004-2005) as well as the Senior Mission Administration and Resource Training (SMART) (2008). He is also an active member of the Chartered Institute for Logistics and Transportation (CILT) UK and is a panel member of the Organization's Field Central Review Body (FCRB). Peter is married to Charmaine and they have two children: a son Dion (31), and daughter Darcel (25). His favorite recreational activities are watching Formula 1, reading, hiking, a little darts with friends and the occasional “Happy Hour”.



The new Force Provost Marshal (FPM)

LtCdr Floro C. Canaleja jr. was born on 8th August 1965 in the historic Palo, Leyte, Philippines. He obtained a baccalaureate degree in philosophy and mass communication prior to his joining the Navy in 1990. After graduating from the Naval Officers Qualification Course in 1991 he volunteered with the Naval Special Warfare Group. Thereupon he rose through various capacities and has commanded all but two of its ten operational units spread across the archipelago. He was designated as the Group's Deputy Commander in 2007.

His other assignments include: the Fleet Provost Marshal; CO of NAVSOG EOD Unit; Special Reaction Unit of the Presidential Security Group; and Staff for Civil Military Operations

in Naval Forces Eastern Mindanao.

He is married to the former Ms. Dolores Erlina and they are blessed with a daughter and twin sons.



The new Chief Communications Officer (CCO)

Mr. Dilraj Gurung was born 8th January 1957 in Kuluang, Malaysia as the second of 9 children. Following his father's footsteps, a retired Captain of the British Army, Mr. Gurung joined the British Army Gurkha Brigade in 1974.

After basic trainings in Hong Kong he was assigned to 246 Gurkha Signals Squadron. He continued his military education at the Trade Training School with the 8 Signal Regiment, Royal Signals at Catterick Garrison, UK.

Having been posted to Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and Brunei, Dilraj Gurung saw service during the First Gulf War at Dahrhan in Saudi Arabia, the Oman and at Incirlik in Turkey.

Mr. Gurung retired from the British Army with the rank of Staff Sergeant in July 1993 after 19 years of exemplary service.

In April 1994 Mr. Gurung joined the United Nations. He has since been posted to Somalia (UNOSOM), Brindisi (UNLB), Cyprus (UNFICYP), Tajikistan (UNMOT/UNTOP) and Papua New Guinea (UNPOB). Mr. Gurung is assigned to UNDOF since April 2001.

Mr. Gurung is married to Zenaida and they have two daughters – Dezerie and Valerie – and a son, Dinesh. His hobbies are shooting, field hockey, badminton, hiking and jogging.



The new Chief Military Personnel Officer (CMPO)

LtCol Kurt Ofenböck was born on 18th June 1961 in Austria. He joined the Austrian Armed Forces in 1981. In 1985 he graduated from the Austrian Military Academy as an Artillery Officer. He served as gun position officer, battery commander, personnel and logistics officer and instructor for logistics in various units. In 2007 he was assigned the Special Forces Chief of Personnel.

He served in several humanitarian missions in Austria and in Sri Lanka. From 2007 to 2008 he held the position of the CLO in the HQ of AUSBATT/UNDOF on the Golan Heights.

The main effort during this time was the command and control of the logistics for the Austrian Battalion, the camp clean-up, the redeployment of the Slovakian Contingent and the deployment of the Croatian Contingent within AUSBATT.

LtCol Ofenböck is married to Claudia and they have three children, one boy and two girls. He is a keen biker and skier and enjoys gardening and traveling. He is interested in culture and sightseeing. His place of residence is at the countryside of Lower Austria.

UNDOF Supported Humanitarian Activities in 2010

Usually members of UNDOF and UNTSO within their mandates are the only individuals able to cross the Israeli-Syrian ceasefire line of 1974. The International Committee of the Red Cross may organize crossings of individuals on humanitarian reasons with UNDOF's support. It is essential that such humanitarian activities be conducted impartially of any objectives, may it be political and military.

Medical and family visits, weddings

To alleviate the problems encountered by the Druze population living on both sides of the ceasefire



Tears after the denial of crossing

line, the conflicting parties agreed to allow certain humanitarian activities. Focusing on re-establishing and maintaining links between families living on either side of the ceasefire line "Humanitarian Crossing" procedures under the auspices of the ICRC, supported by UNDOF were established. For 2010, a total of 37 persons were able to cross C-Gate on twelve separate occasions for various reasons, from a medical visit to attending funerals of relatives.

As for weddings, these matrimonial ceremonies are organized and conducted under ICRC aus-

pices at the UNDOF MP "C" Detachment. The last event of this kind facilitated was in 2008. On 27th Dec 2010 a wedding ceremony was scheduled and all set to be conducted but postponed to January 2011 for unknown reasons.

Student crossings and Pilgrimages

The ICRC, as neutral intermediary, works with officials in both countries to facilitate passage of Golan residents for religious and educational purposes.

Under ICRC sponsorship, Israel allows Druze pilgrims to cross to Syria to visit the Shrine of Abel on Mount Qasioun. In September 2010 a total of 666 persons crossed the ceasefire line for a three-day pilgrimage to Syria.

The crossing of students to attend universities in Syria became a regular activity and in 2010 a total of 520 students crossed UNDOF's MP Detachment "C" on twelve separate occasions.

Repatriations

In the first quarter of this year, one Syrian male was taken into custody by Israel after being captured crossing the A-Line and the Technical Fence. This person was repatriated with the support of UNDOF to Syria.



Druze Pilgrims heading for Abel's Shrine

Economic initiatives

Since five years and upon the request of both Israel and Syria to support the local economy, the crossing of apples from the occupied Golan to the Syrian markets was supported by ICRC and UNDOF. A total of 8,050 tons of fruits were transported from A- to B-Side during spring season in 2010, a slight increase of 200 tons compared to last year. This initiative represents quite an improvement of the local economy.

*Article by
LtCol Cristobal Cosabe, CLPIO
Photos by WO I Wolfgang Grebien
and WO II Arnold Felfer*



Students cross to A-Side for vacations at home

UNDOF ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

For several years UNDOF has been conducting the UNDOF Challenge, a three day event which was organized by UNDOF Units, consisting of three single events, such as GPS navigation, shooting and a driving skills competition.

Over the past few years, UNDOF has been changing its operational concept from a mostly static, to a more flexible concept, so it made sense that the concept of the UNDOF Challenge also changes from a “static” to a more “dynamic and exiting” competition.

Once the Chief Operations Officer, LtCol Volkmar Ertl had discussed and shared his ideas with the Force Commander MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III, the UNDOF Ultimate Challenge was born.

The idea and the concept behind the UUC

The “old” UNDOF Challenge, as mentioned was a three day event, which proved to be a significant amount of time for the battalions and units, so it was agreed that there was a need to reconsider the competition format.

Furthermore the three different competitions were isolated events, whereby only the single results were totaled up by the Mission Training Cell to elect the overall winner.

A decision making process was initiated by the COO to review the former UNDOF Challenge and to reconfigure the competition to address the new goals.

The idea was to condense the competition from three days to a comprehensive, one day event, involving participation from ALL UNDOF contingents, as well incorporating

the support and participation of the various UNDOF branches.

The UNDOF military skills competition was renamed, “The UNDOF Ultimate Challenge (UCC)”, and will be scheduled bi-annually in the spring and autumn as a one day event. The competition will take the form of a series of military skills competitions, testing each individual and team skill at various stands and includes a test of endurance in the form of a forced march.



Changing tyres

The aim of the UUC

The aim of the UUC is to test basic military skills reflecting UNDOF tasks through the medium of a physically and mentally demanding competition between teams drawn from all Battalions, FHQ-Coy and Major Contingents in order to promote ‘Esprit de Corps’ amongst all those who contribute to the UNDOF Mission.

The content of the competition was determined by the Chief of Staff

Col Gurvir S. Kahlon in close cooperation with the COO, the Senior Staff Officer Training Maj Rodolfo Gesim and contingents. The final selection of events was based upon the practical tasks that are conducted routinely by UNDOF soldiers, negating the need for significant training preparation.

Participation is mandatory....

All units and major contingents are mandated to participate. Therefore each battalion and FHQ-Coy will enter at least two teams of six soldiers, less J-CON, who will enter one.

UNDOF HQ and MP Plt and OGG are as well invited to enter teams.

During the first UNDOF Ultimate Challenge athletes showed their “will to excel”

In the early morning of 20 October 2010, the COO reported the mustered competitors from five different UNDOF contingents to the COS. Right after the address of the COS the competitors passed through an in-processing station, where their equipment was checked for standard composition and weight. With buses provided by LogBatt, the competitors were transported to the start point, the shooting range.

Over the course of the competition, in addition to a twenty kilometer endurance run, each team will be required to successfully complete nine different military skill stands over the course of one very long day.

Teams started with the grenade throwing, followed by rifle shooting,

Place	Unit Contingent	Grenade Throwing	Rifle Shooting	Map Reading	Endurance Run	First Aid	Rodeo Driving	Mission a. Mandate	Raft & Rowing	Weapons Assembling	Obstacle Course	Total Points
1 st	INDICON 1	10	12	4	36	12	12	12	9	8	11	126
2 nd	FHQ-Coy/AUT	12	11	9	30	4	6	7	3	12	12	106
3 rd	PHILBATT 2	9	10	11	18	10	5	10	4	7	5	89
4 th	INDICON 3	12	4	6	21	11	3	11	11	6	4	89
5 th	FHQ-Coy/PH	1	9	12	27	4	8	5	6	11	3	86
6 th	HRVCON	8	5	10	9	2	10	8	10	10	9	81
7 th	INDICON 2	6	3	1	33	9	9	2	7	4	7	81
8 th	PHILBATT 2	7	1	8	24	8	11	4	5	3	8	79
9 th	PHILBATT 3	4	7	7	15	5	4	9	12	5	6	74
10 th	PHILBATT 4	5	8	5	3	7	2	6	9	9	2	56
11 th	JCON	4	6	2	6	1	7	2	1	2	10	41
12 th	PHILBATT 1	2	2	3	12	7	1	4	3	1	1	36

and navigation & map reading at the shooting range in Mazra'at Bayt Jinn. Then each team had to proceed to the first aid stand, which was located in the vicinity of Halas village. Enduring conditions of almost 30°Celsius, the weather imposed its own incredible challenge for all competitors. Once teams arrived in Camp Faouar, the finishing line of the endurance run, they faced five more challenges waiting for them at locations staged around the camp. After the mission & mandate test, the assembling of an improvised raft, the weapons assembling competition and the driving skills test, the competitors had to dig deep again to show their “will to excel”, by conquering a 400 meter obstacle course, that itself included nine challenging obstacles!

Award ceremony attended by the Force Commander

In the evening of 20th October, right after the announcement of the final results officiated by Chief Umpire, Canadian Maj Dan Morrison, the UUC teams, the Force Commander UNDOF, National Contingent Commanders, Branch Heads and numerous UNDOF members gathered at the Welfare City to celebrate the award ceremony, organized

by SSO Training. The closing ceremonies were excellently supported by FHQ-Coy members and Radio Gecko. On the stage award presentations were professionally orchestrated by the moderators, Cpl Grace Ferraren, WO II Lemka Buće.

The winning prizes were handed over by the different stand directors,



A well deserved rest

while major prizes were presented by the Force Commander, assisted by the Chief of Staff.

The first UUC Champion was Team 1 India under the leadership of Maj Deepak, earning a total of 126 team points! In addition to the individual prizes handed over to each team member, the first placed Indian team was also awarded the UUC-perpetual prize which was designed and created by Austrian Warrant Officer I

Sixtus Schwarz from HQ-Coy.

Finishing closely, only 20 points behind the first placed team, was Team 1 from FHQ-Coy led by Capt Helmut Fiedler. Rounding out the multi-cultural podium, was the third placed team, Team 2 from the Philippines, captained by Capt Adonis Arco. Well done to all competitors for successfully completing this very challenging course, under indeed challenging conditions!!

The perpetual trophy

In future the UUC perpetual trophy will be passed to the next UUC winning unit/contingent. The only condition on the perpetual trophy is, that no one team can win the award more than three consecutive UUC's. In the event that such an impressive winning streak is achieved, that unit/contingent will take home the perpetual trophy for permanent display at their headquarters.

*Article by LtCol Volkmar Ertl, COO
Photos by UNDOF*





Ambassador's and Military

**A very special annual event for the honorable guests of
A good opportunity for the UNDOF**



Ambassadors summit meeting at Hermon Hotel



Military Attachés enjoying perfect weather

Major General Natalio C. Ecarma III, the Force Commander of UNDOF invited for 6th and 7th October 2010 in Syria accredited Ambassadors and Military Attachés of the UNDOF and UNTSO Troop contributing Countries to visit Camp Faouar and Mount Hermon in the AOR of AUSBATT.

After the briefing by Chief of Staff, Col Gurvir S. Khalon, the convoy sallied out direction Mt. Hermon. At Posn 12 the party stopped for a Rapid Reaction Group Display by FHQ-Coy. Proceeding via Accident Curve Monument, good weather conditions allowed taking the guests to Posn Hermon Hotel at 2814m – the highest permanent manned UN-Position in the world. After a briefing by Commander 1st Coy, Maj Oswald Spender, and unforgettable views to the surrounding scenery the kitchen of Hermon Base provided the visitors with first-rate lunch at a kind set table.

This was followed by a Dynamic and Static Display. Soldiers of the 1st Coy demonstrated in a Rappel and Rescue Exercise their mountain skills and showed their essential items for winter operations like oversnow vehicles and alpine equipment.

Our distinguished guests came back down from the Hermon with unique impressions and an idea about operating on the mountain during summer and winter time.



*Article by Maj Gerold Fraidl, SSO M/PR
Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer*



Attaché's Days at UNDOF

the Troop Contributing Countries of UNDOF and UNTSO. Troops to demonstrate their readiness.



Ambassadors visiting OP 51



Military Attachés in Camp Ziouani

On 12th and 13th October 2010, a group of Ambassadors and Military Attachés visited Camp Ziouani where the Philippine, Indian and Japanese Contingents are located.

They were received by the Force Commander of UNDOF, MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III, at the Officers Mess of the Indian Contingent where they had simple exchange of pleasantries with UNDOF Officers. At the Khetarpal Hall Chief of Staff of UNDOF, Col Gurvir S. Khalon, gave a briefing regarding UNDOF mission, accomplishments and vital contributions to UN Peace-keeping efforts in the Golan Heights.

After the briefing they were taken by bus from Camp Ziouani to OP 51 of Observer Group Golan to view and appreciate a portion of the Area of Separation.

Afterwards they traveled back to Camp Ziouani to witness an array of dynamic and static displays courtesy of the Philippine Battalion. These included Rapid Reaction Group (RRG) performing checkpoint operations, mine clearing, patrolling, medical evacuation and static display of EOD equipment and the visit to the Tradition Hall where previous contingents displayed their wares, accomplishments, replicas and memorabilas. Sumptuous lunch was later served at the International Kitchen.



Mine clearing presentation by PHILBATT

On the following day Military Attachés had a similar program at Camp Ziouani. The familiarization visit aims to expose the Diplomatic Community in Israel to UNDOF operations, and its primordial tasks in maintaining and supervising the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Syria under the UN mandate.

*Article by Maj Ricardo G. Ellorda, PIO PHILBATT
Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer*



“AUSTRIAN ENGINEERS, AS ALWAYS”

The "Barreling Project" in the area of Mount Hermon, a challenge for the Engineer Platoon / AUSBATT

The new verification task conducted on the A-Line in the area of 2nd Coy/AUSBATT in 2009, by relocating existing barrels and establishing additional ones, continued in the other two areas within the 1st and 3rd Coy Areas of Responsibility and is now to be completed.

The Engineer-Platoon/AUSBATT accomplished the task of placing the additional barrels in the hilly area of the 3rd Coy quite easily. The difficulties started when missing barrels had to be placed upon the slopes of Mount Hermon. The rough terrain prevented transport by vehicles to the distant sites. The steepness of the paths did not even allow for the use of donkeys or horses!

Finally it was decided to bring all the necessary materials and equipment on foot to the construction sites. Croatian soldiers of the 3rd Coy assisted in this task. Once at the correct location the new barrels were fixed and tied up to the rocks with steel cables in sweaty teamwork.

However the project's real challenges started in the area of the 1st Coy. Access to the sites in the area of the 1st Coy was only possible from the A-Side.

This required thorough and detailed planning. “Packing lists” had to be prepared to bring the necessary

Long and exhaustive marches with equipment and material were necessary. In areas without the possibility



The foundation for Barrel Z9 is prepared...

equipment and material from the B-Side to the A-Side. It required intensive liaison between UNDOF and GILO to ensure escorts to areas near IDF positions. All aspects of the undertaking needed to go hand in hand and on time to succeed.

to fix and tie the barrels to a rock, foundations had to be excavated by manpower. As concrete could only be mixed on site, maximum physical efforts were necessary to fulfill this demanding task.

In the area of 1st Coy, five more barrels still need to be set up, until we can say that the “Barrel Project” along the A-Line has been successfully completed. The determination of the Austrian Engineer Platoon to this project has proven that you can achieve everything with commitment and willpower, according to their motto:

“Engineers, as always!”

Article by Maj Reinhard Salzmann
Photos by MSgt Wolfgang Bauer



...and the barrel securely put in place

AUCON/UNDOF

Medal Parade and Austrian National Day on the 26th of October 2010

The ratification of the “Act of Neutrality” on the 26th October 1955 is still a topic in today's Austrian security policy. For many years the Armed Forces have focused on the “Austrian National Day” and have used this as an opportunity to demonstrate their readiness and effectiveness to the people of Austria. Hundreds of thousands of citizens participated in the exhibition of the Armed Forces at the “Heldenplatz” at Austria’s capital Vienna this year.



Saluting the flags

the CO/AUCON, LtCol Karl Wolf, saluted about 100 guests of honor - among them representatives of the

diplomatic corps, military attaches, military commanders, local dignitary and a delegation of the Syrian provincial government – and UNDOF members to the Medal Parade.

In his address the FC, MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III, sincerely thanked all of the Austrian “warrior peacekeepers” so far away from home and family for protecting the ceasefire between Syria and Israel. H.E. Dr. Maria Kunz, Ambassador of Austria in Syria, in addressing the troops emphasized that she was highly impressed by the

efforts of the peacekeepers. Then the medals were awarded to the Austrian

soldiers.

After the conclusion of the Medal Parade the Austrians took the opportunity to present regional delicacies such as cheese, bacon, sausage and also Austrian wine and Austrian beer. Almost every region of Austria had a local tidbit to offer and musicians, the “Mooskirchner”, performed to their best to produce a nice and comfortable atmosphere. Posters on display of the Austrian



The flagbearers marching in



The honorary unit presents arms

Austrian Peacekeepers on the Golan Heights like to celebrate the National Day in a grand manner as well. This year the Austrian Contingent again prepared this celebration with a lot of devotion. Meetings were held, instructions and letters penned, ideas collected and finally implemented. The celebration MUST be held under a dignified coverage! In the early afternoon of 26th October



“Die Mooskirchner” - a traditional Austrian band



A Croatian soldier receives his medal...



...as well as his Austrian comrade.

countryside provided for a homelike feeling and showed the beauty of the country to the guests and UNDOF comrades.

By the end of the celebration, and energized by the typical Austrian regional food, the “Blue Helmets” were ready for the next challenges in the “Service of Peace”.

*Article by Maj Markus Kirchner
Photos by MCpl Trabi*

3rd Philippine Contingent vows to continue peacekeeping efforts in Golan Heights

Members of the 3rd Philippine Contingent to the Golan Heights assumed UN peacekeeping duties from their outgoing comrades on Friday, 12th Nov 2010.

On 6th Nov the new contingent, headed by LtCol Sanny L Gadot, landed at Damascus Airport as part of the Philippine contribution to the peace effort on the Israel-Syrian ceasefire line. The 322 dedicated peacekeepers relieved the 2nd Philippine Battalion who had been in the Golan Heights since March 2010 to

In his speech during the ceremony, LtCol Gadot expressed his sincere gratitude to the warm reception extended by the 2nd PHILBATT particularly the thorough orientation of the functions and responsibilities of each respective functional area. He further stressed his appreciation to the support and cooperation extended in the familiarization of the peculiarities of the mission area. The 2nd PHILBATT

certainly received the new batch of peacekeepers with pride and honor.

He also extended his warm welcome accorded by the UNDOF command and staff and the other contingents from Austria, Croatia, India and Japan, representatives of Philippine government in Israel and Syria, and

community of nations that are committed to make the world a better place to live. He encouraged his



Signing ceremony

troops to start it right. “Certainly there will be challenges but it could be readily overcome with the right frame of mind, right focus, firm resolve and strong determination” he added. “Perfect job performance and excellent conduct in the service for global peace must be the battle cry of each personnel”, he said. He furthered that all the members of his contingent are ready to perform in



Handover of the flag

implement and observe the ceasefire agreement in the Area of Separation between Israel and Syria.

Change of Command and turn-over ceremony from outgoing Philippine Battalion Commander LtCol Alexis Gopico to LtCol Gadot was held at Camp Ziouani to ensure the smooth continuation of tasks and duties of PHILBATT in supervising the mandate. The turn-over ceremony was attended by Force Commander UNDOF, MGen Natalio C Encarna III, Philippine Ambassador to Israel H.E. Petronilla Garcia represented by her Vice Consul, Ms. Greg Marie Concha-Marino, equally respected contingents of UNDOF, and guests from the Filipino community in Israel.

the Filipino communities.

LtCol Gadot emphasized that the 3rd batch of Philippine peacekeepers have been properly trained for the mission and vowed to continue the successful peacekeeping effort that the past contingents had contributed. He expressed his commitment to the UN to accomplish the mission and join hands with the other contingents and stakeholders in pursuing the collective goal of a peaceful Golan Heights.

He also assured the Filipino community and the other contingents of UNDOF that the 3rd PHILBATT will respond to the call of duty for the service not only of his but the



Concluding the handover ceremony

full capacity manifesting the outmost conduct of truly discipline soldiers.

The event ended with a traditional olive tree planting ceremony followed by a reception and fellowship.

*Article by Maj Juanito Y Sy, PIO
Photos by PHILBATT*

The Power to Lead the Path

There would be no paths for vehicles to travel on and no trail to tread on and there would be no barrels to rise without the PHILBATT Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team.

These men with the “nerves of steel” are primarily tasked to ensure the safe handling of ordnance in any given situation. Thus they check and sweep paths to clear mines and safely dispose of explosives. Considering that the area of operation of PHILBATT has a serious threat of lethal landmines their deployment is crucial in the mission area. The EOD Team is responsible for certifying patrol paths that contribute to the safety of all people working inside the area of separation.

Patrolling is one of the main tasks of the Philippine Battalion in the conduct of peacekeeping in Golan. Our troops regularly conduct various foot and vehicle patrols within the mission area. The EOD Team is the prime unit that ensures the safety of the routes and paths that our patrolling teams will take. Its efforts enable our patrols to accomplish their tasks.

To the observer they may look stoic and unfeeling while at work, but inside an EOD team member's whole being is a sense of the ultimate adventure. It is this sense of adventure that compels them to completely focus on the task at hand. And what a job they've done so far; during their tour of duty on the Golan Heights they have managed to recover and render safe 43 different pieces of domestic ordnance.

One of those significant opera-

tions for the EOD team is the mine clearing operation conducted at the vicinity of Barrel India 5. It all started with a call from the 2nd Coy at Posn 80 reporting the presence of a landmine on the patrol path. Immediately Maj Marvin M Anat and his



PHILBATT EOD team searches for UXO's or mines

EOD team responded and conducted lateral coordination to ensure the success of the mine clearing and recovery operations. The team later found an M4 Anti-personnel mine containing 180 grams of high explosive filler capable to inflict fatal damage and even loss of life for its unwitting victim. Later it was discovered that mines were scattered throughout the area and would endanger patrolling teams if not removed safely.

Without hesitation the team cleared the patrol path within the minefields and had successfully recovered 41 pieces of M4 and similar AP mines. A mined area was also reported by the patrolling elements of the 1st Coy. The recovered items are being safely stored at Posn 80

Temporary Collection Point for further disposal.

Truly, the recovery of these UXO/mines items is just a jump off point for the EOD to give freedom of movement to the patrol units. The team has also responded to an UXO/mine discovered by the patrolmen of 1P34B, where they recovered a cartridge case of a 60mm illumination round. On that same day they also assisted in clearing a vehicle path a track to give safe way to a UN vehicle that had miscalculated and erroneously parked two meters beyond the red-marked safety path in vicinity of Point Terrace. The team detected three portions in line, a pattern for possible mines dug underneath.

The EOD team is actively pursuing its mandate as more mine clearing and repainting of safety markers were undertaken in various PHILBATT troops' positions. They are also in the lead of marking a blue line for the Bir Ajam Road Construction Project parallel from Barrel O4 to Barrel N6.

The PHILBATT AO indeed poses a big challenge to the EOD team. But with its strong courage and determination, the team will always heed the call of duty and let the whole world recognize the love, dedication and its power to maintain the paths towards a sounding peace.

*Article by Maj Juanito Y Sy, PIO
Photos by PHILBATT*

EXERCISE IRON FIST IN LOGBATT AT A GLANCE

From 30th Nov 2010 to 2nd Dec 2010 the Indian contingent along with J-CON successfully conducted Ex Iron-Fist with utmost professionalism. All members of LOGBATT took a keen interest and made it a successful event.

After the FTX exercise which was conducted on 27th Oct 2010, LOGBATT geared itself to take up Ex Iron Fist with dedication to prove its professional competency. The aim was to test decision making and its execution on ground during exigencies and also during regular affairs of UNDOF. Various practical scenarios were given by the mission training cell. The role players of PHILBATT actively participated to make the scenario realistic.

On 30th Nov 2010 a scenario depicting the unruly protest by 20 civilians outside the gate of Camp Ziouani asking UN to leave the country was dealt promptly by Ops officer who deployed LOGBATT RRG, Smokey party and PHILBATT RRG in close coordination. The Ops officer handled the situation deftly by negotiating with the protesters. The protesters were asked to disperse. But they were reluctant and Smokey party was used to disperse them. Later on, once again to disperse the unruly protesters CERC FHQ coy was utilized. Finally the situation was brought under control due to the excellent reaction of all concerned and by utilizing various available resources judiciously.

In another scenario fire broke out in the vicinity of the International Kitchen which could have been the act of sabotage by an aggrieved local civilian. The Indian contingent Smokey team along with RRG

reached swiftly at the spot. The area was cordoned off by the RRG and simultaneous actions were taken to extinguish the fire swiftly. Later on in the afternoon it was told that arty shelling had taken place in the CZ which resulted in occupation of respective bunkers on sounding the



A victim is rescued...



...and the fire extinguished

siren. The preparedness and occupation of bunker drill was found to be of extremely high standard and in accordance with the directives of UNDOF.

The second day of exercise tested the logistic move of LOGBATT to replenish supplies for 21 days at Posn 60 and 80. The convoy commander of LOGBATT was told that

the convoy had come under protest from civilians while moving from CF to Posn 60. The swift decision taken by the commander to choose another route enabled the timely supply. The same day recovery team of LOGBATT also displayed its navigational efficiency and swift action drill to recover a vehicle which had met with an accident at the designated spot.

The last day of exercise ended with an important scenario of mine accident which resulted in three personnel passing into a subconscious state. The LOGBATT RRG team, Medevac team and Recovery team along with the EOD of PHILBATT reached the spot quickly after being briefed by the duty officer of LOGBATT. The area was secured, and cordoned off by the LOGBATT and PHILBATT RRG. EOD of PHILBATT cleared the mines for the safe passage of Medevac team resulting in timely evacuation and first aid. All actions were as per the SOP and directives of MTC.

Finally the exercise ended with the de-briefing of COO and was summed up by CO LOGBATT. The exercise was a great learning experience and further streamlined the reaction capabilities of LOGBATT to face various operational contingencies.

*Article by Maj Amitabh K Srivastava,
DCO/LB*

Photos by UNDOF

J-CON Medal Parade and J-CON Day

We, the 30th Japanese Contingent, held our Medal Parade and J-CON Day in Camp Ziouani on 7th Dec 2010.

We were proud to host the Force Commander MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III, Mr. Aiki, Minister of Japan to Israel, the Military Attaché Col Hashimoto and the many guests who participated.



FC MGen Ecarma III addresses the troops

The medal parade of J-CON is accompanied by bugle blowing, in accordance with Japanese custom. 46 men under the command of CO



The guests of honor applaud

J-CON Maj Musha, including three UNDOF HQ personnel, were presented with the UNDOF Medal by FC MGen Ecarma III for their 90 days of service within the UNDOF mission.

J-CON Day was held sequentially at Khetarpal Hall and Golan Club. The purpose of J-CON Day is to

introduce aspects of Japanese culture to the UNDOF civilians and soldiers. This is an event that each Japanese rotation hosts proudly.

We believe that J-CON Day festivities lead to a greater understanding and appreciation between nations.

In the Golan Club we served Japanese food including sushi, which was prepared by the J-CON cooks. The cooks were honored to prepare traditional, beautiful Japanese dishes for the enjoyment of our guests.

We demonstrated Judo, Japanese cheerleading, bugle, Kendo and the traditional Japanese top. The audience was impressed by the force of the Japanese martial arts and they enjoyed the terrific energy from Japanese cheerleading.

In the Golan Club additionally we displayed Origami, offered a photo-opportunity with the traditional “kimono” and an opportunity to enjoy the art of Japanese calligraphy. Many guests took this opportunity for collecting souvenirs: their names in traditional Japanese calligraphy, and photographs of themselves wearing kimonos.

J-CON day is about sharing culture and tradition with each other. We thank all those who attended and participated - your smiling faces made it worth all the efforts.

Finally, we offer our most sincere appreciation to all of you for supporting J-CON events.

*Article by Lt1 Koji Wada, Adjutant / Press O / Welfare /J-CON
Photos by WO1 Wolfgang Grebien and SSgt Osamu Masuyama*



J-CON soldiers parade after the ceremony



Traditional Japanese dishes



The presentation of Martial Arts



Delighted guests of the J-CON Day

Observer Group Golan's Mobile Team

In July 2009 the Observer Group Golan established a Mobile Team (MOBT). The primary role of the MOBT is to liaise directly with Syrian civilian authorities in the Area of Separation with the aim of reducing the number of civilian violations. Secondly the MOBT may conduct any special investigations necessary.

The MOBT has been led by UNMOs with a wealth of experience in the area. The current Team Leader is Major Bart Aalberts of the Netherlands who is on his third UNTSO mission having previously served in the mission in 2002 and also 2006. Supporting him are Captain Barry Turley of Ireland and Captain Mariano Mujica of Argentina. The MOBT is based at OGG HQ in Camp Faouar.

In the process of establishing a regular meeting with the local Syrian authorities and the SSAD the MOBT is in close cooperation with the UNDOF Civil Affairs Officer Mrs. Ewa Turek Mazorek. It is expected that these meetings will facilitate projects such as the regular issue of ID cards to shepherds and farmers who are entitled to use the designated "grazing areas" near the A-Line. This in turn should reduce the number of civil-



Capt Turley talks with Syrian Liaison Officers

ian violations as well as making life easier for the shepherds and farmers concerned.

The MOBT has also provided liaison between UNDOF and Syrian authorities conducting civilian demining at the village of Kafr Al Mar located in Wadi Ar Raqqad area in the south and an agricultural plot of land in the vicinity of OP 71 in the north of the AOS.

Article and Photo by Capt Richard Buchan, OGG MIO

First Malawian UNMO joins UNTSO mission Golan

5th December 2010 was a historical date for the UNTSO mission on the Golan Heights, especially for Observer Group Tiberias. For the first time in our mission history we have a member from southern Africa.

LtCol John Chaika came to this mission from the Malawi Defence Force. He is 39 years old, married and the proud father of his three sons. He has enormous experience from previous UN missions in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo as well. Currently he is member of Team Hermon and is preparing himself for his Chief's Challenge tests to become a senior UNMO.

Dear John, welcome to our UNTSO/UNDOF family. We wish you a pleasant time in the Golan and we are proud to have opportunity to serve with you.

Article by Maj Libor Nyeki, Photos by Team Hermon



LtCol John Chaika of the OGG-T Hermon Team at work on OP 51



YES IT IS UNDOF

*Make war for peace, the saying goes
 In a Golan so diverse one can find
 To bring peace, disengage the foes
 Legacy of war, a scarred humankind
 Blue helmets sent forth to preserve
 The agreement and the protocol
 All humanity does, better deserve
 Than virtues we deceitfully extol
 Over the years with untiring effort
 UNDOF has preserved the fragile calm
 Going out of its way to support
 And apply the healing, soothing balm
 From Mount Hermon, the snowy mountain
 To the Raqqad Wadi meandering all along
 Peacekeepers have endured the pain
 Without remorse but with a song
 Filled with hope peace will prevail
 Efforts of UNDOF will certainly count
 It is too big a price to pay, if we fail
 And all hurdles, we do not surmount
 Troops from AusBatt, PhilBatt and Croatia
 Blend effortlessly into their task
 With logistic backing of Japan and India
 Can there be a better combination to ask
 Canada provides, officers good at staff
 OGG is supreme despite the Limitation
 Mission support does the quiet bulwark
 Bringing all effort to successful completion
 With IDF or SSAD you may have to strive
 All that seems good may not always be so
 Due to confusion that may at times arise
 Yet the liaison has to work and grow
 Do not laugh, better still do not scoff
 It is thankless work here in UNDOF*

**Col GS Kahlon, COS
 20 Dec 2010**

