

GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



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DEAR READER !



It is my honour to present the new edition of GOLAN, The UNDOF Journal. With all of its efforts the editorial team once again provides a magazine full of insight into the mission of UNDOF. For their contributions I would like to thank the entire editorial team, the unit press officers, and volunteer writers. We had to bid farewell to our colleagues Lt I Daisuke Tone of J-CON, Capt Celeste Sayson of PHILBATT and our office mate LtCdr Reona Aso in the course of scheduled rotations. However, we can now warmly welcome our new Unit Press Officers Capt Ken Hareyama, Capt Bernadeth D. Tocloy and Capt Seiji Ito of the respective units.

As this will be my final edition of the UNDOF Journal as Chief Editor, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you our loyal readers, for following UNDOF news in this journal or on our website. I hope you enjoyed the fruits of our work whether you are part of our UNDOF team or personally or professionally interested in the UNDOF Mission. In this edi-



Our team: Gernot, Seiji, Stefan, Günther

tion it gives me great pleasure to present articles about the latest innovations of the IT branch, the visit of the Croatian President to his Peacekeepers on the Golan Heights, as well as contingent rotations, the activities of the OGG Mobile Team and much more.

Capt Günther Kreiml

Yours sincerely,
Capt Günther Kreiml, SOPR

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Front (Page 1): OGG Mobile Team talking with a shepherd in AOS
Photo by Capt Günther Kreiml

Back (Page 24): The Croatian President Ivo Josipović in CZ
Photo by SSgt Gernot Payer

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Force Commander's Message

Dear Warrior Peacekeepers!



I never cease to be amazed by two things: the rapid passage of time in the Golan, and the hard work, dedication and professionalism of everyone in the UNDOF Team.

It seems like only yesterday that we were wishing one another a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2012, we watched our camps and positions being winterized and saw people beginning to bundle up in warmer clothing. We got to experience a couple of heavy (by Golan standards) snowfalls, which was a real treat for those from countries that do not normally see snow, and it provided a "taste of home" for those that do. Although of course the AUSBATT soldiers at Mount Hermon are still deep in snow, for the most part, the weather in the rest of the Golan has turned warmer and sunnier. The sun has a powerful effect on people, and like the flowers that shoot from the earth in the spring, so do the smiles on the faces of

those who can turn their faces to the sun as the weather improves.

Regarding my second point, this is not to say that things have been calm on the Golan, despite the improving weather; in fact, quite to the contrary. Recent events in Damascus, the AOS and the AOL, related to the unrest Syria is experiencing have definitely increased the tempo and the complexity in the environment that we work and live in. It has become increasingly more difficult to ensure the maintenance of our mission and mandate, yet I am pleased to say that due to your collective diligence, operational focus, and strong spirit of cooperation, UNDOF continues to succeed. That said, recent events have necessitated some difficult decisions, all of which were made with my top priority, which is the safety and security of all members of UNDOF. As such, at the time of the preparation of this message, we have commenced relocation of most of the UNDOF and OGG military and civilian personnel living in Damascus to UNDOF positions and camps. This was a decision not taken lightly and should the situation in Syria de-escalate, it is fully my intent to have people move back, when the time is right, and we can all be assured of their safety.

The incidents in Damascus, the AOS and the AOL are troubling. I will not sugar-coat it. That said, the best method in which we, regardless of rank, military, civilian, or function, can ensure the maintenance of the mission and mandate, and ensure the collective safety of all is threefold: we all must focus on the situation and keep ourselves aware of what is going on, we must rapidly share information at all times to ensure vigilance, and we must cooperate and assist one another. As I have said many times, at the end of the day, we have each other to depend upon, and so we must more than ever in these challenging times.

Despite all this, I have never been prouder to be your Force Commander. Despite the many demands on us, recent rotations within the Philippine, Indian and Japanese Contingents, everyone has risen to the challenge and ensured the maintenance of peace in the Golan. Hard work and perseverance do pay off!

For those that have recently left, or soon will finish their tour, I remind you that "once you have been a member of UNDOF, you always remain a member of the UNDOF Team". Don't forget your family here in the Golan. In the Service of Peace, to everyone in UNDOF, I say...

One Mission, One Team, One Goal

Thank you, Danke, Salamat, Dhanyavad, Hvala, Arigato!!

Major General Natalio C. Ecarma III
Force Commander UNDOF

Chief of Staff Words

Fellow Peacekeepers!

It has been almost 3 months since I began my tour as COS UNDOF. Unlike so many other Austrian soldiers it is my first tour in UNDOF and I must admit that I came in with mixed feelings. Since this is my first mission abroad I was looking forward to the new assignment and challenges that come with it. On the other hand the media was full of stories relating to the situation in Syria prior to my arrival and I was not certain of its impact on the UNDOF mission.

Fortunately I had a proper handover/takeover period and I would like to take the opportunity to thank my predecessor, Col Martin Dorfer for leaving behind a well-organized office. From my perspective we had a seamless transition and I could start my work without any delay.

As COS UNDOF I am the coordinator and supervisor of all Military Branches of UNDOF HQ and therefore responsible for all military matters within the mission. According to my job description I should ensure coordinated action and free the Force Commander from routine details so that he can fully concentrate on the problems that merit his attention.

Having this in mind I do my best to direct and organize the staff to fulfill our mandate. From my understanding a staff of an organization like UNDOF should work in two directions: Firstly to support the Force Commander and to work for him but also for the subordinate units.

The products of the HQ are important since they address not only the UN Headquarters in New York but also the parties of the ceasefire agreement, but it is all the peacekeepers at the positions and on patrols that form the basis of the work for the HQ. In order to be able to deliver these fundamentals our units need to be provided with a proper framework of directives and orders and this is also a very important task for a staff.

What are our current challenges? In the first three months of this year UNDOF experienced already rotations of three contingents, namely PHILCON, IND-CON and J-CON. The AUTCON and HRVCON rotation will follow in two months' time. This keeps high pressure on our mission and everyone is invited to do his/her best to familiarize as quickly as possible within our operational environment. Constant training and close coordination will be the most important



tools to maintain the high standards of UNDOF.

An issue that is becoming more and more important is Force Protection. This issue is ongoing and will keep us occupied for the rest of the year. Safety and security of our peacekeepers is of utmost importance and therefore we cannot do enough to achieve and maintain the highest standards.

The recently conducted relocation of the majority of our civilian staff and the OGG UNMOS constitutes a new situation for most of our peacekeepers, since they stay in Camp FAOUAR and at selected positions. I am confident that together we will handle this challenge until they can move back to Damascus.

In closing, I would like to introduce my office. Maj Christian Leitgeb is my Military Assistant. He is a very experienced peacekeeper who has had tours in UNDOF and UNMEE. In addition to his UN-tours he served with KFOR. Sgt Armin Gogl is well known here in UNDOF since he has been the driver/assistant of already four previous Austrian Chiefs of Staff in addition to his various other tours. For me it is not only very helpful but also a privilege to have such experienced personnel around me.

Finally I would like to express my sincere hope for a peaceful future in Syria and to remind all of my fellow peacekeepers to concentrate on our mandate in order to maintain the peace in the Golan Heights.

"One Mission – One Team – One Goal"

Colonel Andreas Rotheneder, Chief of Staff UNDOF

Visits to UNDOF

by Capt Seiji Ito, DMPIO



MGen Nicolas Matern, Deputy Commanding Officer of the Canadian Expeditionary Force Command, visited Camp Ziouani and met with FC UNDOF (5th Jan 2012)



Col Younes, new Chief of SSAD, visited Camp Faouar and met with FC UNDOF (11th Jan 2012)



Mr. Koji Haneda, Director-General of Japanese International Peace Cooperation Headquarters, visited Camp Faouar and Ziouani, met with FC UNDOF (10th, 12th Jan 2012)



H.E. Mr. Ivo Josipović, President of the Republic of Croatia, visited Camp Ziouani and met with FC UNDOF (12th Feb 2012)



LtGen Yasuki Miyazaki, Commanding General of the 10th Division of Japan Self Defense Force, visited Camp Ziouani and met with FC UNDOF (13th Feb 2012)

- H. E. Maria Kunz, Austrian Ambassador, visited Camp Faouar and attended the Change of Command of AUSBATT (24th Jan 2012)
- BGen Günter Ruderstaller, Austrian Armed Forces Command, visited Camp Faouar and attended the Change of Command of AUSBATT (24th Jan 2012)
- Belgium Parliament members visited Camp Ziouani (8th Feb 2012)
- H.E. Mrs. Olivia V. Palala, new Philippine Ambassador and Chargé d'Affaires ad interim, visited Camp Faouar and the PHILBATT 1st Company Area (13th Feb 2012)
- H.E. Mr. Hideo Sato, Japanese Ambassador, visited Camp Ziouani and attended the Change of Command of J-CON (1st Mar 2012)



The new Chief of Staff (COS)

Col Andreas Rotheneder was born on 15th Nov 1965 in Wiener Neustadt, Austria. He graduated from the Austrian Military Academy as an artillery officer in 1988. In addition to the various mandatory courses, he attended the Field Artillery Officer Advanced Course in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, the NATO Logistics and NATO Staff Officers Course at SHAPE, the NATO Operational Logistics Planning Course and the European Security and Defense College – High Level Course. He is a graduate of the General Staff and Command Course in Vienna.

Before being appointed as COS UNDOF, Col Rotheneder had assignments as an Instructor at the Austrian Artillery School, Battery Commander, Instructor for Tactics/Logistics/Staff Duties and thereafter Head of Development and Research Department at the Military Academy, PfP Logistics Officer at SHAPE/Belgium, Head of Department 3 (EU) at the Military Policy Division/MOD, CO of the 3rd Artillery and Reconnaissance Battalion and finally Deputy Head of the Military Policy Division/MOD.

Col Rotheneder is married to Claudia and they have three sons – Markus (12), Simon (10) and Kilian (8).



The new Chief Operations Officer (COO)

LtCol Robert Glanner was born on 24th Aug 1964 in Baden, Austria. He joined the Austrian Armed Forces in 1983 and graduated from the Theresian Military Academy in Wiener Neustadt in 1988 as an Artillery Officer. He served for 16 years at the Austrian Artillery School in Baden as Battery XO, Battery Commander, Logistics Officer and Chief Training Officer. In 2004 he joined the Management 2010, MOD, as a desk officer. Since 2008 he is appointed as the MA of the Deputy CHOD of the Austrian Armed Forces. He has participated in four operational, international tours. In 1996 he served as CLO AUSBATT/UNDOF, in 2002 as COO AUSBATT/UNDOF and in 2006 as CO

AUSBATT/ UNDOF. Lastly, in 2010, he served as CO Austrian NSE & CDR Regional Coordination Center/ EUFOR "ALTHEA". He attended the Battalion and Regiment Commanders Course at the National Defense Academy and graduated as Master of Security and Defense Management (MSD) in 2006.

LtCol Glanner is married to Susanne and their union is blessed with two children – Theresa and Alexander. His hobbies are skiing, playing tennis and hunting.



The new CO PHILBATT

Col Ramon C. Estella was born on 17th Mar 1961, in WA-O Lanao Del Sur, Philippines. He joined the Philippine Army in 1984 after graduating from the Philippine Military Academy. He holds a Masters Degree in National Security Administration from the National Defense College of the Philippines. He finished the Command and General Staff Course at the Command and General Staff College, Training and Doctrine Command, Philippine Army and also attended the Conflict Management and Resolution Skills Professional and Training Seminar, as well as the Defense Management Seminar in Australia. He is a well decorated officer who has occupied various field staff and commander positions. As

an Infantry Officer he served as Platoon Leader, Executive Officer, Company Commander and later as Battalion Commander.

He is a seasoned combat officer with previous battlefield experience against communist insurgents, separatist groups and lawless elements in his country. In 2004 he became the Chief of the Army Operation Center, Philippine Army. In 2006 he served as the Group Commander of the 6th Army Training Group, TRADOC. Prior to his present command post as PHILBATT Commander, he was assigned as Chief of Staff of the Headquarters and Headquarters Support Group of the Philippine Army.

Col Estella is happily married to Charisse and blessed with two children – Nerrisa and Ramon Jr.



The new CO AUSBATT

LtCol Christian Kneissl was born on the 5th Apr 1967 in Hollabrunn, Lower Austria. He joined the Austrian Armed Forces in 1985. After graduating as an NCO in 1988, he successfully completed the Military Academy. In 1994, after graduating from the Military Academy, he began his career in the 9th Mechanized Infantry Battalion. From 1994 until 2008 he served there in various positions as Platoon Leader, Company Commander, Staff Officer, DCO and CO.

In 2008 he was engaged as a Planning Officer in the MOD/Directorate II (Planning)/Transformation Division in the Planning Process & Resources Planning Section, where he still serves. He is a graduate of the National Defence College in Vienna and holds a Masters of Security and Defence Management, which he received in 2008. LtCol Kneissl participated in several NATO/PfP Exercises such as "Peace-Shield 2003" and "Cooperative Associate 2003". In 2005-2006 he was the Commander of the S II Division AUCON/KFOR 13 in Kosovo.

His hobbies are mainly connected to sports and his big passion is playing soccer.



The new CO LOGBATT

LtCol Rahul Doegar was born on 14th Nov 1976 at Panchkula, India. He graduated from the National Defense Academy and was commissioned from the Indian Military Academy into the Regiment of Artillery in 1998. In addition to the various mandatory courses, he holds a Masters Degree in Weapon System and Technology and is a qualified Instructor in Gunnery. He is also qualified on the Technical Staff Officers Course.

He has experience in serving in various terrains ranging from deserts to high altitude areas and has operated in active counter insurgency operations. During his service, he served as a Gun Position Officer (GPO), Observation Post Officer (OP), Battery Commander and second in command. He had staff appointments as GSO3 in an Artillery Brigade and GSO1 at HQ Army Training Command.

LtCol Doegar is married to Mrs Tanu and they are blessed with a daughter and a son. He is a keen sportsman and enjoys listening to music.



The new CO J-CON

Maj Nanjo Mamoru was born on 6th Jan 1977 in Tokyo and spent several childhood years abroad in London. He joined the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force in 1999 after graduating from the National Defense Academy with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration. He is a graduate of the JGSDF Command and General Staff Course.

Maj Nanjo began his military career as Infantry Platoon Leader and Ranger Instructor from 2000 till 2003. In the following year he worked as an Instructor at the National Defense Academy. From 2004 through 2007, he served as Regimental Operations Officer. In 2008-2009, Maj Nanjo was Training Instructor at the JGSDF Officer Candidate School and by 2010 he was commanding the Combat Vehicle Company. When the great earthquake shook Japan on 11th Mar 2011 he took part in the disaster relief operations and was in charge of life saving and transportation.

Maj Nanjo is married to Saori and they have a daughter, Madoka (9) and a son, Hajime (8). They currently live in Hokkaido in the northern part of Japan. His hobbies include running and bicycling. Vis-à-vis the UNDOF tour, Maj Nanjo is looking forward to the cultural exchange and teamwork with fellow peacekeepers.

Bustling activity behind the scenes – the General Services Section

It is a formidable challenge to pull the strings in the background and keep a peacekeeping mission like UNDOF going even if conditions change. We accompanied some of the employees of the General Services Section (GSS) during their daily business.

Early in the morning we met Farid Shaya of the GSS's Receiving and Inspection Unit at the UNDOF Headquarters' refrig-

travel management for about 200 UNDOF national and international as well as military personnel. Her job is to organize airline tick-

us some insight into his daily business of dealing with Camp services and facility management contracts, pest control, garbage collection



Mr. Shaya performing a quality check



Camp Services staff cutting weak branches

erator and storage area. He was busy checking a delivery of fresh fruit, vegetables and other food supplies which is bought at the local market in the mission area, and arrives 3 times weekly. "I have to make sure that all products of the 1,600 kg load meet the quality and quantity requirements before they will be distributed to the different battalions and units of UNDOF", Mr. Shaya told us.

Back in the GSS office building we met Teif Al-Hasso who was busy arranging tickets and visas for official travels for training purpose as she is responsible for

ets, visas, exit and entry permissions and the rotation of the whole Japanese peacekeeping contingent.

Later we stopped by at the Camp Services Unit where Mahmoud Hashem Agha, Supervisor of a five member team, made time to give

and management of the highly frequented transient accommodation among other duties. Minutes later we witnessed some of his colleagues trimming trees in order to avoid damage to personnel or equipment through falling branches caused by snowfall or strong winds.

Deeply impressed from the various activities we leave the GSS with its five units; Property Control and Inventory, Travel, Shipping Receipt and Inspection, Claims and Camp Services, and are proud to be working with them in one mission and one team for one goal.



GSS staff located in Camp Faouar

*Article by Capt Kreiml Günther,
SOPR*

Photos by SSgt Gernot Payer

Spotlight on UNDOF's multinational supply team

A working logistics system and a hard working supply team is the backbone of each military organization. One being so used to it only would realize the full value the day it would not work anymore.

The Austrian supply platoon together with Indian, Japanese, and Filipino colleagues is responsible for the food supply in Camp Faouar, the base of UNDOF headquarters. After Food supplies arrive at the Receiving & Inspection Unit of GSS they are distributed to over 20 positions as well as the two Camps, one on each side of the Area of Separation. The goods necessary to provide sufficient food supplies to all permanent or temporary occupants of Camp Faouar are received by AUSBATT's supply team.

The Austrian International Kitchen (AIK) dining facility in Camp Faouar provides Indian, Japanese, Filipino and of course Austrian meals according to the weekly meal plan, which is available for viewing at the UNDOF intranet, for around 400 military and civilian UNDOF members daily.

The hard work of the kitchen team behind the scenes is not always noticeable. It is the team's dedication to their daily work that fills many bellies with mostly amazingly delicious food. The baker for example starts at one o'clock in the morning with his preparation for the breakfast in order to pamper hungry peacekeepers with a huge variation of bread.

Supply means also responsibility for clothing including laundry and accommodation equipment. The head of the supply platoon Capt Martin Rosenberger is very proud of his team and happy about the excellent team work within the platoon and also within the UNDOF supply section. "Our efforts are not only honored by the many compliments we receive about our food but also by the continuous high assessment results during HQ logistic inspections".

Article by Capt Martin Rosenberger, Quartermaster/AB
Photos by SSgt Gernot Payer



Cooks enjoy multinational team work and friendship



Fresh bread is baked daily

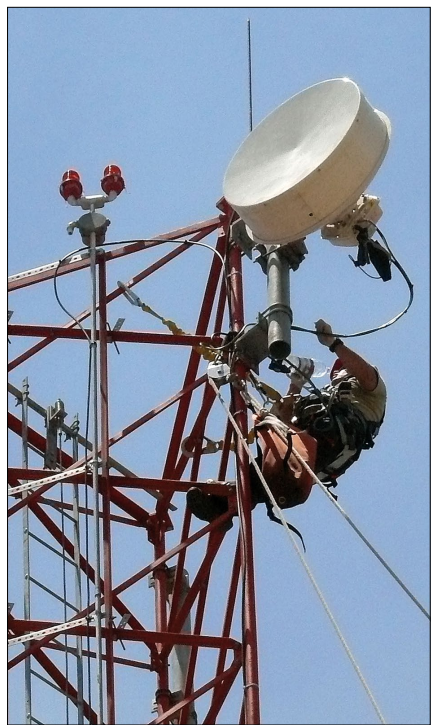


Capt Rosenberger doing his rounds in the kitchen

Telecommunications – Tower Replacement Project

Today the requirements at each remote location are much more demanding than before and each location requires a wide number of ICT services like IBM Lotus Notes, internet, shared files and folders, digital telephones, Intranet, databases, video telephony, etc.

The telecommunication towers at all the UNTSO OPs have been in use for a very long time, some of them are as old as the mission itself. Back in their prime, these towers were sufficient to keep all the required equipment, such as radios and repeaters, running well.



High-tech provides a reliable network

As the mission's needs became more demanding, the scope of communications expanded and the reliable VHF radio was simply no longer adequate. Modern ICT services rely heavily on a high capacity data networks and new microwave radio connections utilize antennas which are larger and heavier than the old

VHF ones. This Microwave network is the backbone of our UNDOF – UNTSO Wide Area Network (WAN).

In order to provide a robust platform we require at each OP a solid and stable tower structure capable of withstanding the extreme weather conditions encountered year-round on the Golan Heights. The towers need to be higher than the before in order to achieve improved line of sight between several OPs and UNDOF Positions. Due to the high precision required by the microwave links, stability of the system is essential. The antennas must remain in alignment under severe weather conditions such as wind, rain, snow or extreme heat. Physical stability is essential in order to provide the expected industry standard of 99.99% link reliability.

The project undertaken in 2011 on the UNTSO A-side Ops to replace all telecommunication towers was complex and required close cooperation and teamwork of ICTS, Procurement, Engineering, LOGBATT. The acquisition of the required materials, securing external vendor contracts, installation of the new towers as well as the dismantling of the old ones safely, all required a high degree of expertise and professionalism.

The new towers have improved coverage for radios and repeaters



Members of the multi professional team

and created a clear line of sight for microwave radio links. These combined elements deliver a more stable and robust network with more bandwidth and faster services such as those provided at UNDOF HQ. This project has undoubtedly improved the technical part of UNTSO – UNDOF telecommunications, and it has contributed to a more effective flow of information within and between the missions. This improved transmission of data has augmented the ICT services needed to observe and report and to otherwise enforce the UNDOF – UNTSO mandates. The second and final part of this major project will be executed in 2012 and involves replacing seven more towers at B-Side OPs and at some UNDOF positions. Once this is done, UNDOF and UNTSO are ready to provide whatever ICT solutions may be required in their furthest Golani outposts.

*Article by Nery Garcia
Photos by IT-Section*

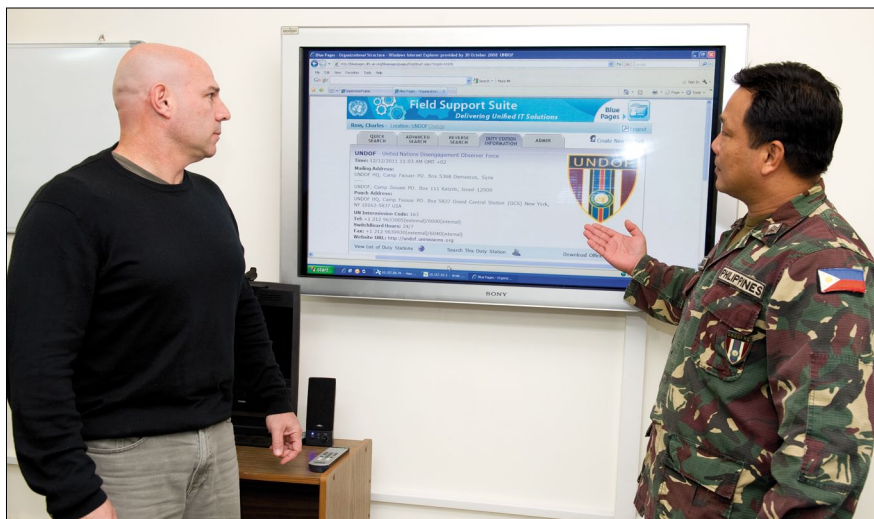
iNeed and Blue Pages come to UNDOF

During 2011 UNDOF Information and Communications Technology Services (ICTS) has led a number of initiatives focused on the implementation of corporate, centralized IT solutions.

The aim of these initiatives is to enhance user experience, streamline business processes and introduce centralised application management capacity in UNLB (Brindisi, Italy) and UNSB-V (Valencia, Spain) by removing the burden of operating local IT systems in the mission. Two such systems implemented in UNDOF during 2011 were: *Blue Pages* and *iNeed*.

On 1st Jun 2011, ICTS announced the launch of new Service Desk Application called iNeed. iNeed is a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) application which was implemented in UNHQ and UNLB, and is currently undergoing implementation in all other peacekeeping missions. UNDOF has been the first mission to fully implement iNeed to record, track, and analyse service calls.

The iNeed self-service portal is a web-based application available at <https://ineedservice.un.org> that replaced the home-grown Lotus Notes ISS-eRequest database. By



ICTS staff demonstrating the functionality of the new Blue Pages

using iNeed, customers can now report a problem or request a service, exchange communication with service providers, and receive status updates notifications. Managers can control approvals using self-service by viewing, rejecting or approving requests.

On 1st Dec 2011, ICTS launched a new telephone directory system called Blue Pages.

Blue Pages is a web-based contact management tool accessible at <http://bluepages.dfs.un.org> and was developed by Information and Communications Technology Division (ICTD/DFS) in UNHQ, with a goal to replace locally developed Lotus Notes telephone directories. It intelligently displays phone numbers based on the user location, allows users to edit their own contact information, to easily maintain own personal contact lists and is downloadable in excel format.

Blue Pages and iNeed are just some of the initiatives ICTS has been working on during 2011, and ICTS team would like to use this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and give a thanks to many people within UNDOF, who have made it possible for these important systems to come to fruition.

*Article by Ms. Senida Panjeta, Chief IT
Photos by SSgt Gernot Payer*



iNeed administrator Mr. Mattoo

Observer Group Golan Mobile Team - “The Driving Force”

The OGG Mobile Team was established in July 2009 with the task of assisting UNDOF to reduce the number of civilian and shepherd violations of the A-Line in the Area of Separation (AOS).



The Mobile Team (MOBT) is the maneuver element of OGG HQ available on order to the FC UNDOF. MOBT also supports UNDOF Chief Liaison Protocol Information Officer (CLPIO) and Civil Affairs Officer (CAO) with their civil operations with the Syrian Authorities.

Today, the MOBT has evolved to its current role of providing the FC UNDOF/COGG with detailed, continuous situational awareness information within the UNDOF Area of Responsibility (AOR) to respond to situations which are or may lead to an increase in tension levels and a possible violation of the 1974 Agreement.

The MOBT is comprised of four experienced OGG Line UN Military Observers (UNMO) of different nationalities that operate on a daily basis from OGG HQ in Camp

Faouar. UNMOs are selected from both OGG outstations - Damascus and Tiberias, and conduct operations within the OGG AOR, on both sides of the AOS. In September 2011 the fourth member arrived to the MOBT. This new member is an Arabic speaker and offers a highly valued linguistic capability to the MOBT to effectively achieve its mission.

Investigating a mine incident

Syrian media reported a mine blast in the town of Al Rafid, on the Syrian Golan Heights, which resulted in the death of five local Syrian children. Given the location of this incident in the southern part of the AOS, FC UNDOF tasked COGG, to investigate the matter at short notice. COGG tasked MOBT to investigate the incident.

Two MOBT members travelled to the town of Al Rafid and made contact with a village senior, indicating the UN's desire to make contact with the family involved. The man, who held the UN in high regard, immediately set aside the dealings of his daily life and led the MOBT through the back roads of Al Rafid to a small homestead surrounded by marked minefields, remnants of the many armed conflicts that have plagued the Golan Heights in recent decades. Erected in the main yard of the homestead was a canvas tent filled with grieving men. This is customary for the local population when a village is in mourning.

The MOBT UNMO's approached the tent. Using their Arabic language skills the MOBT introduced themselves and offered condolences on behalf of the UN working in the Golan, to the families of

the victims of this indiscriminate explosion. The people of Al Rafid were extremely receptive of this, noting how grateful they were that an organization such as the UN was quick to send representatives to express sympathy for a family and a town in mourning, still suffering the consequences of war.

After many cups of bitter Arabic coffee, a mourning tradition among the people, the grandfather of the deceased children agreed to accompany the MOBT to the area where the mine blast occurred, and allowed them to examine the scene of the incident. He led the UNMOs to his back yard which was fenced off with barbed wire and marked with mine warning signs. He explained that five of his grandchildren, oblivious to the dangers of landmines, had entered the minefield to play and had inadvertently detonated a mine, resulting in all of their deaths. He facilitated the UNMOs in gathering the necessary information in order to accurately record the incident and ultimately help the UN on the Syrian Golan to prevent similar reoccurrences in the future.

Upon completion, the MOBT members rejoined the funeral tent and reaffirmed UNDOF's commitment to peace and stability in the



MOBT UNMO talks to a shepherd in the AOS

region so that occurrences such as this were not repeated. The family, once again, expressed thanks to the UN for their concern for the safety of civilians on the Syrian Golan, and the sensitivity of the UN for acknowledging the local population's plight of living daily in such a heavily mined area.

Resolving a crossing violation

UNDOF CLPIO requested OGG assistance in resolving a situation that developed in the central AOS west of Bir Ajam. Due to inclement weather and limited fuel supply in the area, the local civilian population had gathered in the vicinity of A-Line barrels "O" to "O4", in order to gather firewood that had been recently cut down by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) west of the A-Line, to improve their lines of observation in the area. The locals were determined to gather this wood at whatever cost despite the inherent risk of mines and defensive reac-

tion from the IDF, associated with crossing west of the A-Line.

COGG tasked MOBT to assist the CLPIO and CAO to try peacefully to resolve the situation. Once on the scene the MOBT quickly identified the seriousness of the situation and again through its Arabic speaking capabilities provided excellent interpretive skills to the CLPIO who was coordinating UNDOF's peace role on the scene, liaising with both Syrian and IDF authorities. MOBT submitted a report to the CLPIO with suggested courses of action and this was presented to the FC UNDOF the following morning. Soon after, the initial tense situation relaxed and became more controlled through the agreement of both sides.

These are just two examples of OGG MOBT's daily operations. MOBT endeavors to provide timely, accurate and effective situational awareness information to UNDOF and OGG HQ, as required. MOBT continues to provide its "driving force" capabilities in support of UNDOF, who continuously operate in the service of peace on the Syrian Golan.



The OGG Mobile Team

*Article by Capt Brian Walsh (Ire),
Team Leader MOBT / OGG
Photos by Capt Günther Kreiml, SOPR*

Change of Austrian leadership in the Golan Heights

On 24th January the outgoing Commanding Officer of the Austrian Battalion, LtCol Andreas Schiffbänker, turned over responsibilities to his successor, LtCol Christian Kneissl.



FC hands over the standard to the incoming CO LtCol Kneissl

The formal turnover of command was completed by the symbolic passing on the Austrian standard to the incoming CO and the signing of certificates together with Force Commander MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III. The parade was witnessed by numerous national, international, civil and military dignitaries as well as by BGen Günter Ruderstaller, representing the Austrian Joint Forces Command, and the Austrian Ambassador to Syria, H.E. Maria Kunz.

The incoming CO, LtCol Kneissl emphasized in his speech the important role of Austrian peacekeepers in the Golan Heights and expressed his pride about taking over a well-trained, experienced and motivated battalion.

The turnover of the responsibilities of the Chief of Staff (COS) UNDOF was also conducted during the ceremony. The outgoing COS Col Martin Dorfer, as the most senior Austrian officer in UNDOF was also the Austrian National Contingent Commander (NCC). The incoming COS and NCC is Col Andreas

Rotheneder. MGen Ecarma III praised the great performance and the high level of commitment of the

Austrian Battalion during the past twelve months under the outstanding leadership of LtCol Andreas Schiffbänker. New challenges and frequent changes to the operational situation have made a flexible and mobile command and control necessary in order to fulfill the mandated tasks in the Area of Responsibility. The harmonic cooperation and excellent teamwork among the Austrian peacekeepers was to a large part an achievement of the prudent actions of Col Martin Dorfer.

The parade was concluded with moving farewell scenes and the song "I am from Austria" as background music before the march out of the troops and a following reception at the kitchen that offered traditional Austrian cuisine.

*Article by Maj Otmar Fasching, OpsInfo/AB
Photos by SSgt Gernot Payer*



Outgoing and incoming Austrian Officers with FC UNDOF

Fire Brigade – 24 hours, day and night ready

Two violent explosions shake the deceptive calm in Camp Faouar followed by dense clouds of smoke emerging from a workshop building.

Screaming “fire, fire, fire”, several workers tumble into the open desperately trying to catch attention. Suddenly a man burning like a fire ball walks out of the smoke and breaks down exhausted after a few steps. A passing quick-thinking peacekeeper extinguishes the man aflame with his body. Fed by a rapid oxygen supply half the building is already ablaze when siren wailing calls for the fire brigade.

Suddenly a horrifying message is heard - two comrades are still inside the burning building. Every second counts and every move must be correct when one group gets dressed in fireproof clothes and dons breathing apparatus, while other groups prepare the fire hoses. Led by the brigade commander MSgt Johann Pfeiffer and his deputy WO Karl Tupi all action runs smoothly and very professionally.



Rescue team carrying a victim



Last instruction before entering the burning building

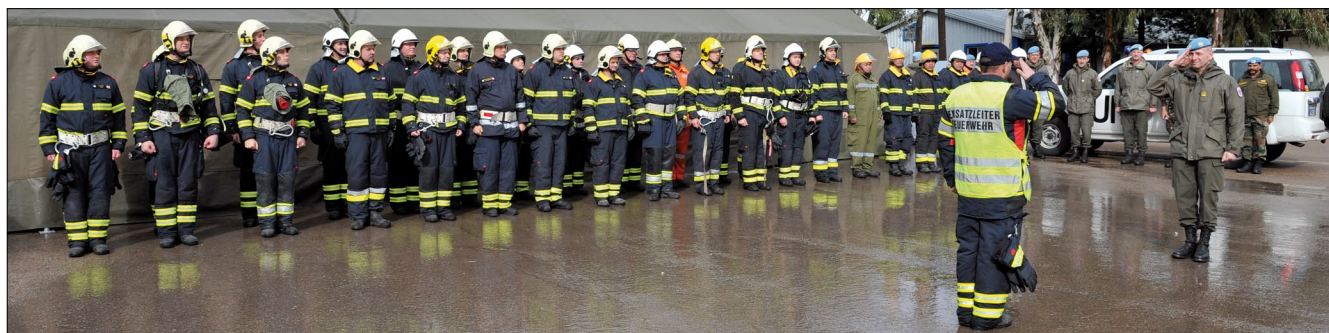
A team of one woman and 25 men keeps a cool head and knows what to do. As practiced hundreds of times during their weekly fire fighting training now eventually it's up to everyone to do the right thing.

er followed by the second only seconds later. The standby medical team takes over the two seriously injured and great relief spreads triggered by the message “fire blown out!” minutes later.

Covered by several water jets the firefighter's rescue group makes its way into the building. Anxious minutes of waiting with the hope for good faith keep numerous spectators breathless until the first victim is recovered

Luckily this time it was just an exercise to practice firefighting skills and the command and coordination process between Fire Brigade, PHILBATT, LOGBATT, MP and the AUSBATT Medical Center. But since January 2012 the Camp Fire Brigade had already six real operations for technical assistance and fire fighting and we are happy to have these volunteer peacekeepers providing all this extra effort, which is additional to their normal tasks.

*Article by Maj Otmar Fasching, Ops Info/AB
Photos by SSgt Gernot Payer*



Officer in Charge reporting to COS Col Rotheneder

Change of Command – PHILBATT

On 16th Feb 2012, LtCol Cornelio Valencia, Jr. handed over the command of PHILBATT to his successor LtCol Ramon Estella.



LtCol Estella takes flag and Command

On a cold and blustery day, a simple ceremony was held at Ketarpal Hall in Camp Ziouani, where the outgoing commander, LtCol Cornelio Valencia, Jr. transferred his responsibilities as PHILBATT commander to his successor, LtCol Ramon Estella.

The Ambassador to Israel, H.E. Generoso D.G. Calonge, embassy officials and their dependents, representatives from the Israeli Defence Force, members of the Filipino community (FFCI), and contingent commanders from other contributing countries gathered to witness the change of command ceremonies.

In his farewell speech, LtCol Valencia thanked UNDOF, his fellow contingent commanders and the Filipino community in Israel for the trust and confidence they have extended to him. He also expressed his gratitude to the Embassy for

their untiring support given to the whole contingent.

The new commander, LtCol Estella said that, "Leading the battalion especially during these trying times is not an easy task," but he would make an effort to equal, if not surpass, the accomplishments made by the outgoing contingent. He also thanked his predecessor and the entire member of the 4th Philippine Contingent to the Golan Heights for their diligent job done in the

past few months, and wished the soldiers to be rotated out every success and a safe journey as they will soon be reunited with their families.

Ambassador Calonge congratulated the outgoing battalion for a job well done for having successfully completed their mission in the Golan Heights. In welcoming the new troops to UNDOF, he said that the embassy looks forward to a positive collaboration for the benefit of the Filipino Community in Israel and expressed hope that the new contingent will build upon what was started.

The UNDOF Force Commander, MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III thanked the outgoing battalion for the service they have rendered to UNDOF and in maintaining the peace and stability in the Golan. The event ended with a traditional olive tree planting ceremony at Camp Ziouani parade ground, symbolic of the value that all parties involved place in stability and security in the Mission area.

*Article by Capt Bernadeth D. Tocloy,
PIO / PHILBATT*

Photos by SSgt Gernot Payer



Ambassador Calonge attends the Change of Command Ceremony of PHILBATT

New Breed of Filipino Peacekeepers arrived in the Golan

The Philippines had been participating in the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions since 1949. Now, another rotation of Filipino peacekeepers arrived in the Golan on 10th Feb 2012.



Foot patrol during mission preparation

The 5th Philippine Contingent to Golan Heights (PCGH) is headed by Contingent Commander LtCol Ramon C. Estella and is composed of 322 members, including 17 females. It is a unit comprised of officers and enlisted personnel coming from different units of the Philippine Army. The new set of officers chosen to perform the UNDOF peacekeeping mission is confident and well prepared to meet the challenges ahead of them.

Just like the other contingents, the 5th PCGH members surpassed the 3 months stern selection procedures which include: board interview, physical examination test and the medical examination test conducted/supervised by the Philippine Army Selection Board for UN Foreign Deployment.

The Pre-Deployment Training comprises two training modules. The common module includes the generic train-

ing, peacekeepers tasks in peace support operations, basic language, cultural sensitivities, and stress management trainings amongst others. It is completed by the comprehensive examination followed by the conduct of a command post exercise (CPX). Moreover, the specialization module includes clerical, VIP security, security defense platoon, food preparation, culinary, maintenance and transportation, and others.

Since every mission area is unique, the group has also undergone training on infantry, mechanized infantry, signals, military police, re-barreling, explosives and ordinance skills. In order to further enhance the capability of every member of the group, they are subjected to take the enhancement module which includes: medical, language, disarming and close battle competencies. It also includes the mission specific cultural orientation.

The deployment of the 5th PCGH to the Golan Heights is our country's modest contribution to the United Nations as it continues to perform its role in the advocacy of international peace and solidarity.

*Article by Capt Bernadeth D. Tocloy,
PIO / PHILBATT*

Photos by Capt Annie Abella and Capt Phaveena Aguinaldo



Female soldiers proud to work for the UN in the service of peace

National Day celebration

On 27th Jan 2012, the Indian contingent celebrated its National Day with pomp and show.

The celebrations commenced with the wreath laying ceremony in which wreaths were laid by the Force Commander and CO LOGBATT to the Indian soldiers who have made the supreme sacrifice. This was followed by a presentation on India which showcased the various colors and facets of India which included history, geography, modern India and the "Military might".

The Contingent also performed the Bihu and Bhangra dances which left the audience spellbound. Also



MGen Ecarma III lays a wreath

there was an Individual Dance performance which added the Bollywood flavor to the celebrations.

The celebrations were followed by a sumptuous lunch at the International kitchen. On the menu were a host of dishes prepared by the Indian chefs. The courses included Indian as well as kosher dishes to suit the tastes of all the invitees.

Article by Maj Himmat Singh, Maint PI

INDCON Holi celebration

In India Holi is a festival that brings unadulterated joy and mirth, fun and play, music and dance. On 9th Mar 2012 the 11th Rotation celebrated this colorful festival in Camp Ziouani

During the festival people fill the streets in large numbers and smear each other with bright hued powders and squirt colored water on one another using water guns irrespective of caste, color, race, sex or social status; all these differences are temporarily relegated to the background and people give into an unalloyed colorful rebellion. There is exchange of sweets and greetings, and all join in frenzied dance to the rhythm of the drums.

Together, the rich and poor, women and men, enjoy each other's presence on this joyous day. The atmosphere is filled with excitement, fun and joy amongst international staff, host nation representatives and staff officers also coming from Camp Faouar. The Force Commander and other senior personnel made a spirited appearance for the event and took part enthusiastically in the festivities. The day was an ideal example of bonhomie and camaraderie among personnel who despite coming from a wide spectrum of cultures and traditions, indulged in celebrations with unabated passion and fervor. The Indian contingent was elated on its part to play host to an incredible assemblage of friends.

Article by Maj Himmat Singh, Maint PI / Photos by LtCol Eligen Villafior, CMPO



CO LOGBATT, his officers and peacekeepers...



...of other contingents enjoy Holi alike

TOCA Parade of the Indian Contingent

On 21st Mar 2012 the 11th Rotation of INDCON handed over the responsibilities of the UNDOF Logistics Battalion to the 12th Rotation during a parade in Camp Ziouani.

A remarkable military parade was conducted in complete synchronization to the delight of the viewers to mark the occasion. The parade was reviewed by MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III, Force Commander, UNDOF and was commanded by Maj Vijayant Chauhan SC, SM. The guest list comprised military and civilian staff members of UNDOF, host nation personnel, government officials and prominent representatives of the local community. In his address, the Force Commander lauded the troops of the outgoing rotation for their prodigious display of professionalism, discipline and conduct.

He also conveyed his gratitude for their tireless work in carrying out the mandate of UNDOF, which he did in their native language, much to the delight of all. The outgoing Commanding Officer, LtCol Rajwinder S. Mangat then expressed his appreciation to all personnel for making his team's tenure successful. He handed over the command baton to LtCol Rahul Doegar, Commanding Officer of the incoming rotation and wished him and his rotation the best of luck.

LtCol Doegar also expressed hope that they would carry out their duties with dedication and perseverance living up to the traditions of the 17 Parachute Field Regiment and the Indian Army. The event culminated in a sumptuous lunch in the International Kitchen of Camp Ziouani.



LtCol Rahul Doegar the new Commanding Officer of LOGBATT



Formal signing of the documents

Article by Maj N. P. Singh, OPSO/LB



Croatian President visited Croatian soldiers on the Golan Heights

On 12th Feb 2012 the Croatian President Ivo Josipović honoured the Croatian Peacekeepers by his visit in the Golan Heights.



FC MGen Ecarma III and President Josipović inspect the troops

tasks and maintain security in this Mission to the pride of our country“, the Croatian President said.

MGen Ecarma III said that UNDOF has been successful at keeping the peace on the Golan Heights for over 37 years. He is very satisfied with the Croatian Peacekeepers and their performance, as all the challenges they faced during the past months have shown that they are very professional and reliable. Croatian troops have participated in the UN Peacekeeping mission on the Golan Heights since June 2008. Currently 96 Peacekeepers are deployed under the command of Maj Ivica Brajković mainly

The President and Supreme Commander of the Croatian Armed Forces was accompanied by the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Vesna Pusić and the Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces LtGen Drago Lovric. The honourable guests were received by a Croatian honour guard and later briefed about the operational situation in the Mission Area by the UNDOF Force Commander MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III.

Thereafter the President dedicated much of his time to talk with all Croatian Peacekeepers, to gain first-hand insight into their duties and experiences gained in the UNDOF Mission. All present Croatian soldiers were proud and happy for the occasion to meet the Croatian President here in the Golan Heights. During an interview Presi-



President Josipović and Ms Pusić together with their peacekeepers

dent Josipović told a Croatian media team that Croatia could be proud of its soldiers serving for peace in the Golan. “They regularly carry out all

as part of the AUSBATT but they also fill some HQ posts.

*Article by Lt I Tihomir Kastmiller,
DCoyCdr 3rd Coy
Photos by SSgt Gernot Payer*

Arrival of the 33rd Japanese Contingent

On 18th Feb and 3rd Mar 2012 the 33rd J-CON arriving at Camp Ziouani, were met with biting cold weather on the Golan Heights, but also a warm reception of peacekeepers of LOGBATT and PHILBATT standing at the main gate in a receiving line.

J-CON



Change of Command Ceremony



Maj Nanjo painting one eye on our 'Daruma' doll



J-CON members offering a moment of silent prayer

The J-CON Change of Command ceremony took place on 1st March in Camp Ziouani, with the outgoing CO Maj Shigehiro Noshita handing over his responsibilities to the incoming CO Maj Mamoru Nanjo. Maj Nanjo painted one eye on our traditional Daruma Doll which is famous in Japan as a good luck charm with the wish to accomplish our duties and return safely to Japan. When our wish will be fulfilled, he will paint the second eye on the doll.

On 11th March, we then offered a moment of silent prayer for the victims of Japan's major earthquake last year. At present, more than 15,000 bodies have been found and more than 3,000 are still missing. The people of Japan truly appreciate

the support from the many nations who lent a helping hand and stood beside us as we gathered strength to meet this great challenge.

The 33rd J-CON is composed of 36 Ground Self Defense Force members, three Maritime Self Defense Force members and four Air Defense Force members. Our troops come from Hokkaido, north of Japan. In the summer, this area enjoys a mild climate. But in the winter it snows heavily, with temperatures in the minus thirty degrees Celsius range. We are no strangers to snow conditions, with often more than one meter of accumulation on the ground. With this extensive experience, we are fully prepared for our dispatch to UNDOF.

Every six months the J-CON



Japanese flag at half-mast

membership is changed, but our strong motivation to the UNDOF mission has not changed. Furthermore, we are looking forward to sharing our traditions and culture with other members of the UNDOF team and enhancing and enriching friendship and good relations.

*Article by Capt Ken Hareyama, PO/ J-CON
Photos by SSgt Kenta Sasaki, Sig/ J-CON*

UNDOF MP – Advocates of Road Safety

In January 2012, UNDOF conducted the Road Safety Awareness Campaign which was spearheaded by the Mission Training Cell, Transport Section, and the Military Police Platoon

The campaign aimed to convey awareness to all members of UNDOF the significance of preserving our assets especially our UN vehicles, to reduce if not to entirely prevent traffic accidents by keeping road safety in mind at all times. The training was conducted in four sessions held in Camp Faouar and two sessions in Camp Ziouani.

Major Roland Reinprecht, the Force Provost Marshal (FPM) and LCdr Bonifacio Agas, the Deputy FPM participated in the campaign by acting as lecturers regarding the roles of the Military Police in the prevention of traffic accidents in the mission area. Such roles include: random checks of UN vehicles - see to it that drivers are wearing seatbelts; necessary documents are inside the vehicle, tools, medical kits, and a fire extinguisher are available as well as other things that are significant for safe driving; sobriety checks - are conducted to ensure that UN drivers are physically and mentally fit for driving; radar checks - to see to it that UN drivers are abiding to the speed limit imposed by UNDOF and host nation to specific roads and highways in the mission area; and dog checks - to ensure that vehicles leaving and entering the camp are

free of explosives, drugs and forbidden items.

Moreover, they also impart to the participants the steps that need to be taken by UN drivers when traffic accidents do occur. UN drivers should secure the accident scene by wearing a warning vest, remain with the vehicle, and render first aid to any injured persons. Additional, the accident must be immediately reported to the JOC or MP duty officer. Keep in mind that drivers are not to leave the accident scene unless they had permission from the MP or when their lives might be in danger.

Aside from traffic accidents, other hazards we should always consider include obstacles, such as rem-

nants of barbed wire, broken fences, protruding metal objects, poles and collapsed buildings. Likewise, the abundance of stones and rocks along the roadsides leaves vehicles vulnerable if you go off the road. The additional sudden appearance of cows and sheep along the roadway makes every trip a challenge.

As such, all members of Team UNDOF must be advocates of road safety. Let each of us do our part in preserving our mobility assets because in doing so, we also preserve our greatest asset of all which is life itself.

*Article by LCdr Bonifacio Agas,
DFPM/MP
Photo by SSgt Gernot Payer*



LCdr Agas, DFPM conducting lecture on road safety

New Office Building – Phase of Construction

As reported in GOLAN the UNDOF Journal No. 129 the project was started with a Ground Breaking Ceremony in October 2011.

With the final floor plan signed off in April 2011 by the Force Commander, MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III, and the Project Steering Committee represented by CISS, Mr. Gerard Buckley, the Building 33 construction project underwent its technical development phase. Engineering personnel spent countless hours at their drafting boards to draw all the technical plans and systems while simultaneously recording the statement of work. Based on these documents the vendors submitted their bids to the UNDOF Procurement Office to determine who would be awarded the contract. After legal approval, the day of commencing construction work arrived and the actual ground breaking took place on 13th Oct 2011.

The approved vendor, Mr. Grandoqa & Company, was sworn in to perform up to his highest capability. He has been working diligently with MSgt Gerhard Perchthaler, the designated project supervisor for the successful implementation of this well reputed project.

Comprehensive excavation was required for the foundation of the structure comprising of roughly 3,000 m³ of unearthing and transporting of soil. In addition, six large

fuel tanks which were buried at the construction site, a former fuelling station, had to be unearthed and recovered. Construction of the sub-structure, consisting of tie beams and ground columns followed in

poured into place by using a truck-mounted conveyor system. This method ensures a consistently high level of concrete quality throughout, and a sound structure for its future occupants.

Once the double story structure was topped with a roof the final layout took shape, and the completed building will soon become a reality. The next phase is that of installing all utility systems. The UNDOF Electrical Unit has already commenced installing concealed wiring in the building and soon the IT Section will follow. Subsequently the other sub-planning teams will become involved in the detailed scheduling, such as safety & security systems, new furnishings and office fixtures as well as final finishing touches such as paintings and photographs for the interior.

Meanwhile the UNDOF Project Management will conclude spot details to enhance

the final architectural appearance of the new office building. How all of these goals will have worked out and how the new building will be suited for its opening will be covered in one of our next Journals.

*Article by Maj Eng. Roman Zaller, FCEO
Photos by SSgt Gernot Payer*



the next stage. The entirety of reinforced concrete work consisted of approximately 800 m³ of casting concrete into its formwork. During this process a revolutionary technique was applied. Prefabricated concrete 'Ready Mix' was delivered to the site by drum mixer trucks and

