

# GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal

**FORTY YEARS OF PEACEKEEPING**  
**1974 - 2014**



April - June 2014  
No. 139



# DEAR READERS!

**There is a time for everything!**

**N**ow is the time for me to say goodbye to UNDOF. And what better way to be farewelled, with an eventful second quarter, with lasting memories; celebration of UNDOF's 40 years of existence; high profile visits including Fiji's Head of State, His Excellency, Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, and even more unforgettable is the adrenaline rush triggered by life threatening aerial bombardments near the vicinity of Camp Faouar in the dead of night. Thank goodness for "bomb shelter drills"(With no casualties...God has been good!).

As long as the UN Security Council is unanimous in preserving peace on the Golan, this mission will continue to operate. Many peacekeepers will come and go but the mission and mandate will remain; even with the change in situation. Once, it was a simple task, now, it is more demanding...But this "time" will pass, Ecclesiastes 3:8 says that there is "*a time to love and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace.*" Let us all be optimistic that the time for peace will be in the near future.

I give two thumbs up for the collective efforts and hard work of the media team and to all those who have contributed to the Golan Journals. While this edition may be my final one, it will not be the last for UNDOF.

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*Photo by Kanishk Chauban*

**Back (Page 24):** Position 12 taken from Hermon Base

*Photo by Sgt Capt Dr Karki Bibek*



*From left: Maj Ned Taito, SSo Media/PR*

*Centre: Maj Deborah W. Tove, SO PR*

*Right: Sgt Jese Sorovi, Force Photographer*

I welcome our capable replacements; the new SSO Media/PR from Ireland and the new SO PR from Nepal. With their credentials and experiences, I am sure that they will overcome all challenges and fill our shoes with ease. I wish them all the best!

To all the friends that I have made here in UNDOF... You will be missed! *Inshalla* we will meet again!

Yours sincerely,

*Maj Deborah Wise Tove  
SOPR*



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Dear Gallant Peacekeepers,

The last quarter has witnessed a spiral escalation in levels of violence across the area of responsibility (AOR) through exchange of fire of heavier weapons including anti-tank guided missiles and precision guided munitions.

Last month we celebrated the 40th anniversary of UNDOF wherein the Blue Helmet fraternity re-affirmed their pledge to commit themselves to ensure peace and tranquility on the Golan. We also had the opportunity to host Mr Herve Ladsous, USG, DPKO. Mr Ladsous and his team got a first-hand experience of crisis management efforts by the UNDOF Crisis Management group's functioning during the recent ceasefire violation on night 22 June which resulted in civilian and military casualties on either side. We were able to respond to the crisis effectively due to the maturity, skill and professionalism of the staff and the line battalions. Kudos to each one of you!!



FIJIBATT 1 peacekeepers have displayed tremendous astuteness and tact in handling the delicate cease-fire between SAAF and the armed opposition groups in the Northern AOS. As their tour of duty comes to an end, we hope that the next rotation would come up to the exacting standards set by these pioneers. NEPCON 2 on Mt Hermon has taken to the hills very well and the soldiers are firmly situated in their positions. It gave me a deep sense of satisfaction to present each and every peacekeeper from Fiji and Nepal UN medals at their positions in situ. I must commend LtCol Sitiveni Qiliho for his sterling leadership.

PHILBATT 7 is firmly in the saddle in the Southern AOR after eight months of deployment. Operationally and administratively, they have risen to the challenges posed by the ever fluid situation in the Southern AOR since the opposition groups wrested the initiative from the SAAF in the south.

I take this opportunity to commend the stellar work done by INDCON 15 (LOGBATT) in providing vital logistics support through innovations in repair and maintenance techniques, services support and conducting high-profile visits and sports events.

IRECON has finally received its much awaited CIED capability that will further enhance its effectiveness.

It is heartening to see a positive response of the TCCs of UNTSO who after our interaction in the Security Council have started lifting the caveats. Our UNMOs provide value addition to UNDOF. Collectively, we have continued to improvise, adapt and evolve to face the challenges posed to us.

Thank You, Danke, Salamat, Vinaka, Dhanyawad, Shukran, and Toe Dah!!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Singha'.

Lieutenant General Iqbal Singh Singha  
Head of Mission & Force Commander UNDOF

## Deputy Force Commander's Message



During this quarter we saw UNDOF reach its 40<sup>th</sup> year in the service of peace on the Golan. Since its modest inception, following the ceasefire between Syria and Israel in 1974, UNDOF has contributed significantly to keeping the peace on the Golan; through its presence in the Area of Separation, and through its liaison with the respective host nations. All peacekeepers who have served with UNDOF are complimented and acknowledged for this achievement; in particular all those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for peace on the Golan. Credit is also attributed to the host nations; for accepting to comply with UNDOF's mandate by accommodating the Mission as a whole.

The present volatile situation on the Golan indicates more challenges to come in the days ahead; therefore, we must continue to evolve with the security conditions and enhance our mitigation measures in the area of operation. UNDOF has already started to take the necessary steps to improve the safety and security of its personnel and property. The manpower has increased, and new security capabilities continue to be introduced into the mission area; with the latest inclusion of counter improvised explosive devices. There is no doubt that the present configuration of UNDOF has made it a more robust and capable force than ever before.

In the last quarter we have witnessed contingents complete their deployments and depart for their homelands. At the same time they are being replaced by their fellow countrymen. Recently, we have witnessed the departure of the 15th LOGBATT after six months of successful service in the mission area. The 1st FIJIBATT will soon be rotating after successfully completing one year tour of duty on the Golan. I must congratulate both contingents for all their effort and hard work whilst serving with UNDOF; and at the same time, I wish to welcome the incoming 16th LOGBATT and 2nd FIJIBATT; as well as the additional 73 NEPCON personnel. The best of luck to all the incoming Contingents in this mission!

The weather in the mission area has started to change with high temperatures being felt by everyone. This is probably the hottest month ever experienced in the mission; hence, I urge you all to be safe, drink lots of water and take care of yourself.

I wish you all a Happy 40th Anniversary of UNDOF, and I congratulate everyone for making it's celebration a grand success.

Thank you!

Brigadier General Hari Bahadur Basnet  
Deputy Force Commander UNDOF

# Chief of Staff's Address

*Mabuhay!*

Greetings my fellow Peacekeepers!

Another quarter has passed since I addressed you for the first time in this publication. A lot has happened for that span of time both in the administrative and operational facets of UNDOF. Our operational environment continues to be volatile due to the domestic situation in the Bravo side that is gravely affecting the Area of Separation (AOS).

Nevertheless, I see UNDOF well adapting to the demands of the mission area. Thanks to the best team that is continuously working with excellence to keep the mission going in high states.

Distinction seemed an ordinary mark of every member of this mission in day to day work. Everyone maintains distinguished signature in respective fields always exuding the highest degree of professionalism. I am glad that such quality has never faltered despite the grueling tasks and unforgiving situations sometimes encountered.

Allow me to express my gratitude and congratulations to fellow Peacekeepers in UNDOF. On 22 May, 30 May and June 10, we have celebrated the commemoration of UNDOF's 40th anniversary in ROD, Camp Faouar and Camp Ziouani respectively. The festivities were done exceedingly well as manifested by the feedbacks from the visitors; friends and ambassadors who attended the activities. This triumph could not have been possible without the united support of every UNDOF member notwithstanding the individual proficiencies to handle given tasks. Every now and again, teamwork proves an always effective tool to success.

We are all aware of the challenges this mission faces brought by the prevailing situation in the AOS. Our steadfast commitment to do our job and united resolve will keep us going forward and stay the course. Just recently, I learned that the UN Security Council has extended the mandate of UNDOF for another six months. Sustaining it is everybody's mission. Therefore, I encourage everyone to accept the challenge with much dedication and vigor. Let us work together and bring more success to this mission.

Keep up the good work and carry on....



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ezra James Palomero Enriquez'.

Colonel Ezra James Palomero Enriquez  
Chief of Staff UNDOF





### **The new Commanding Officer NEPCON (CO NEPCON)**

LtCol Mohan Chhetri was born on 10 September 1968 in Kathmandu, Nepal. He joined the Nepal Army in 1990, went through Officer Cadet Course, and was commissioned in 1992 from the Nepal Army Academy. He was posted to the Infantry Battalion after getting commissioned. He has served at all levels of command including Coy Commander, Brigade Major and Bn Commander. LtCol Chhetri was also an Instructor Officer at Army Intelligence School and Army Infantry School.

LtCol Chhetri was appointed Welfare Officer of NEPBATT in UNPROFOR (Former Yugoslavia) in 1994. He was Staff Officer at Force HQ in UNAMSIL (Sierra Leone) in 2005. Further he served as UNMO in UNAMID (Darfur, Sudan) in 2008.

Besides career courses, LtCol Chhetri has done Mountain Warfare Training and climbed 7000 meter height peak in Nepal. He has also done Surveillance Detection Training in Texas of USA.

LtCol Chhetri is happily married with 2 children and is fond of playing football and travelling.



### **The new Commanding Officer INDCON (CO INDCON)**

Lt Col Arun Kalia was born on 26 Sep 1977 in Punjab, India. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy and the Indian Military Academy. He was commissioned into the Regiment of Artillery in Jun 1999. He holds a Masters Degree in Weapon Systems from Pune University and a Masters Degree in Defence Studies from Madras University. He is also a qualified instructor in Infantry Weapons. He has done his Long Gunnery Staff Course and is a qualified instructor in gunnery. As a young Lieutenant, he participated in the Kargil War in 1999. He has commanded an Artillery Battery in mountainous, plains, desert and counter insurgency areas. It was during his tenure in the counter Insurgency area that the officer was awarded the

Chief of Army Staff Commendation Card for gallantry in 2010. The officer has also served as a General Staff Officer Grade-1 of a composite Artillery Brigade in an Artillery Division in the desert sector. A graduate of the prestigious Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, the officer has recently been approved for the rank of a Colonel.

Lt Col Arun Kalia is married to Sulakshna and they are blessed with two sons, Vaibhav aged 7 and Praket aged 2. He is a keen sportsman and his hobbies include golf, squash and music.



### **The new Chief Civilian Personnel Officer (CCPO)**

Mr. Shahid Kamal was born on 20 August 1969 at Jhelum, Pakistan. He was commissioned in the Pakistan Army in 1991 as Mechanized Infantry Officer. During his military service, Mr. Shahid held various appointments.

Mr. Shahid holds a Specialist Master's degree in "Industrial Relations and Personnel Management" from Warwick Business School, Warwick University UK, a Master's degree in Business Administration from Greenwich University Pakistan and Diploma in Labor Law from Pakistan.

Mr. Kamal joined UN in 2008 as a Human Resources Officer. His first assignment was with UNMIS – United Nations Mission in Sudan at Khartoum as a "Recruitment Officer". In 2010, he was reassigned to UNMIT – United Nations Mission in Timor Leste, as "Chief of Recruitment Unit". After completing his 2 ½ years of assignment with UNMIT he was reassigned to "Regional Service Center" Entebbe Uganda in Jan 2013, as Recruitment Officer Central and East Africa. Mr. Shahid joined UNDOF as "Chief Human Resources Officer" in Feb 2014.

# Visit of the USG, DPKO Mr. Herve Ladsous

The Under –Secretary General and Head of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Herve Ladsous visited Camp Faouar on 22-23 June and he was briefed on a whole gamut of operational and administrative aspects and functions of the Mission. Mr. Ladsous was also taken for a line tour to sensitive UN positions.

During his two day visit Mr. Ladsous started by meeting important dignitaries of the Syrian Government like Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Faisal Mekdad and Lt Gen Mahmoud Abdulwahab Shawa, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff and the Senior Syrian Arab Delegate Brig Gen Ibrahim Younes. Here he was engaged with them in a meaningful interaction on substantive issues pertaining to safety of UNDOF personnel, logistics support to the Mission in Syria and facilitation of early induction of the much awaited C-IED Equipment from Ireland.

In Camp Faouar, Mr. Ladsous was given detailed briefings on political, operations, security and logistics issues concerning UNDOF. On the first night of his visit, Mr. Ladsous saw firsthand the functioning of the JOC and the Crisis Management Group during the exchange of fire across the AOS that precipitated the midnight air raid by the Israeli Air Force on Syrian positions. Mr. Ladsous praised the manner in which we went about our job with quiet efficiency and were able to diffuse the crisis. He was very pleased to get a firsthand experience in a crisis situation in the field. On Day Two of his visit the USG attended the Morning Brief and the Town Hall Meeting wherein he presented the Peacekeepers of the Month Award to military and civilian staff. The visit culminated with the Line Tour to UN Position 27, 60 and OP 56. Overall, the USG's visit to the Mission was holistic and eventful, one that brought to the fore the new challenges that lie ahead for UNDOF. The USG made special efforts to address troops from each TCC and also had a Town Hall meeting with the national and international staff in three locations.



*From top left(clockwise): USG, DPKO Mr Herve Ladsous welcomed with a guard of honour from FIJIBATT. Mr Herve Ladsous inspects the guards. Mr Ladsous addresses NEPCON soldiers. FC with the USG at Position 27.*



# Celebrating UNDOF's 40th birthday in a big way

**UNDOF celebrated its 40th birthday in a big way by organizing a cycle expedition and hosting three different celebrations at ROD, Camp Faouar and Camp Ziouani.**

**I**t was forty years ago on 31 May, 1974 that the UN Security Council resolution 350 was passed for the establishment of UNDOF and its mission mandate. And UNDOF ensured that maximum number of its staff were included in its anniversary celebrations. The 40th anniversary of UNDOF was celebrated in ROD on May 22; in Camp Faouar on May 30; and in Camp Ziouani on June 09. The presence of members of the Diplomatic Corp, Representatives of International bodies, and Representatives of local authorities added weight to the occasion.

The parade which comprised of soldiers from all the troop contributing countries (TCCs) and civilian staff witnessed the laying of wreaths for 54 soldiers and one civilian peacekeeper who lost their lives whilst serving with UNDOF. Following the wreath laying, two minutes silence was observed in their honor. The solemnity of the occasion was broken with cultural entertainment by performers from the various TCCs as well as lively displays of their respective countries in separate booths.

In his address, the Head of Mission and Force Commander, Lt Gen Iqbal Singh Singha thanked the troop contributing countries for the contribution of troops to the mission. He also acknowledged the Diplomatic Communities that were present for showing confidence in UNDOF. He thanked them for their assistance in moving UNDOF forward; by continuing with its mandate. At the same time he also thanked the relevant stakeholders of the 1974 Agreement for respecting UNDOF's mandate.

The invited speakers acknowledged UNDOF's presence and contribution to the peace process on the Golan and reaffirmed their continued support to the mission. Maj Gen Michael Finn the COS UNTSO reiterated his support for UNDOF saying that UNTSO and UNDOF were security creating mechanisms for the fulfillment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

He said that OGG would always remain by Force Commanders side as long as it takes and was equally proud of UNDOF's support towards OGG. He also mentioned that UNTSO could not do it without the cooperation of host nations authority; both civilian and military.

The designated officer, Syria offered his congratulations to UNDOF not for the length of its existence but for the quality and delivery of what it did. "For trying to preserve calm and quiet and trying to avoid at all costs and by all means possible resolve to violence," he said. "From that we draw strength and hope that in the years to come would see quiet returning," he added. He said that Syria was going through an exceptional circumstance but that it would pass and it is the collective responsibility of all UN organizations to work together for the restoration of calm and return of normalcy.

LtGen Singha's leadership qualities did not go unnoticed. The representative from the one of the TCC's, the charge d' affair of India's High Commission praised LtGen Singha for successfully managing the Mission although UNDOF's operation was disrupted by the conflict in the past year. Also, the COS UNTSO praised the Force Commander for his leadership saying that, "Your leadership found the ways and brought the means to enhance the protection and capabilities of our peacekeepers. We continue to measure success in the region by the prevention of conflict between states."

As a token of UNDOF's appreciation for their support and cooperation, the FC presented plaques to the diplomatic corp. Also, 40th anniversary medallions were presented to representatives of TCC's and participants of the cycle expedition; an event organized by LOGBATT to commemorate UNDOF's 40 years in the service of peace.







# Parades in Camp Faouar and Camp Ziouani









# UNDOF Cyclothon – “Let Peace Prevail”

In five days, participants of the cycle expedition had to cover a distance of 480km from Golan to Eilat. The event was designed to radiate a spirit of cohesiveness and camaraderie and to reflect the 40 years that UNDOF has served on the Golan with great `elan.

The LOGBATT organized activity, headed by the Commanding Officer LtCol Sanjeev Haryal saw the diverse participation of members of UNDOF as well as members of the local cycling club. The Force Commander and Head of Mission, LtGen Iqbal S. Singha and the Chief of Staff UNDOF were among the cyclists during the event.

In the launching ceremony, LtGen I.S. Singha and Mrs Ballie Singh released a banner strapped to colorful balloons which read “Let Peace Prevail”...Following this, approximately 100 cyclists headed off for Bet Shean, making four stops on the way under the scorching sun. The five day event was challenging but once the participants reached the finish line, the pain was overshadowed by the cool sea breeze and warm sea of Eilat. “I would definitely do it again if I had a chance to” said Capt Aurelio Kigis, a participant of the expedition.

## The five day journey...

### ROUTE MAP



#### DAY 1 – 24 May (97 km)

- Start Point- Camp Ziouani
- 1st Halt( 29 Km)- Rosh Pinna
- 2nd Halt (27 Km)- Tiberias (Lunch)
- 3rd Halt (18 Km)- Ashdot Ya'ako Ihud
- NI Halt (23 Km)- Bet Shean
- Terrain - Mostly Down Slope

#### DAY 2 – 25 May (95 km)

- Start Point - Bet Shean
- 1st Halt(27 Km) -Quad Ida(Tea)
- 2nd Halt(25 Km- Argaman (Lunch)
- 3rd Halt(27 Km) - Uja(Tea)
- NI Halt - En Gedi
- Terrain- Mostly Down Slope

#### DAY 3 – 26 May (80 km)

- Start Point - Megillot Regional Council
- 1st Halt( 22 Km) - Samar Nibshan Site
- 2nd Halt (20 Km)- En Gedi (Lunch)
- 3rd Halt (20 Km)-Bar Yehuda Airfield
- NI Halt - En Gedi
- Terrain- Mostly Up Slope

#### DAY 4– 27 May (108 km)

- Start Point- En Bokek
- 1st Halt( 23 Km)- Potassium Terminal
- 2nd Halt (25 Km)-Derech Haarava Parking Lot (Lunch)
- 3rd Halt (30 Km) - Sapir Park (Tea)
- NI Halt - Eilat Beach
- Terrain - Mostly Down Slope In Desert

#### DAY 5– 28 May (99 km)

- Start Point- Paran
- 1st Halt( 28km)- Nahal Shita River and Road Jn(Tea)
- 2nd Halt (30 Km)- Yotvata (Lunch)
- 3rd Halt (23 Km)- Beer Ora(Tea)
- NI Halt (18 Km)- Eilat Beach
- Terrain - Mostly Plains In Desert

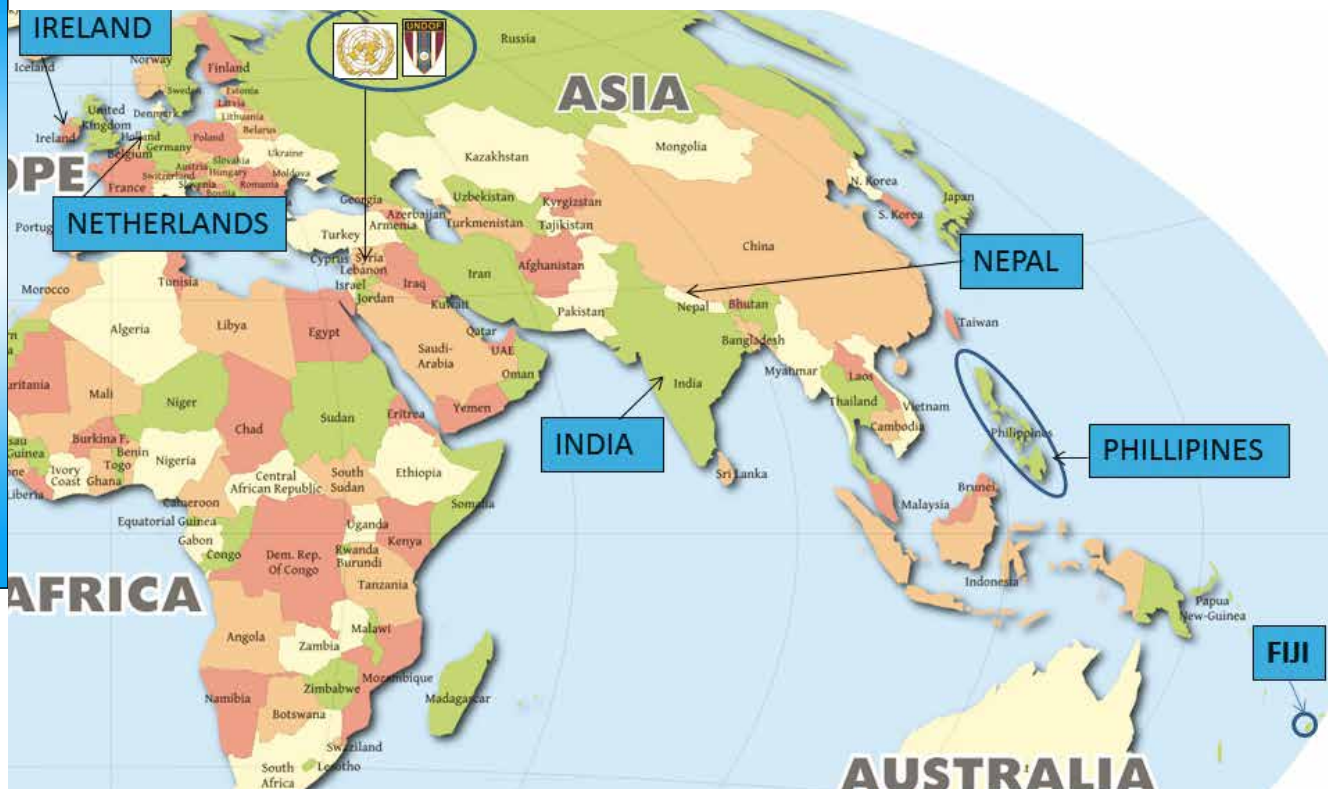






# TCC's on the world map

UNDOF



Fiji

## Fiji

**Distance from Syria:**

**UN Member:**

**UNDOF:**

**Independence Day:**

**Republic:**

**Total area:**

**Population:**

**Average temperature:**

**Language:**

**Religion:**

9,658 miles

**Capital:**

Suva

13 October, 1970; first UN Peacekeeping since 1978

joined on 28 June, 2013 **Strength:** 500 troops

10 October, 1970 (from Britain)

28 September, 1987

7,056 square miles

872,742 (2012) World Bank

18 C – 32C (Best holiday period - (Mar - Dec)

Fijian, English, Hindustani

64.5% Christians



Philippines

## Philippines

**Distance from Syria:**

**UN member:**

1963 **UNDOF:**

**Independence Day:**

**Total area:**

**Population:**

**Average temp:**

**Language:**

**Religion:**

5,305 miles

**Capital:**

Manila

24 October, 1945 first UN Peacekeeping since  
joined on October, 2009 **Strength:** 347 troops

04 July, 1946 (from US)

120,000 square miles

96.71 million (2012) World Bank

21C – 32C (coolest – Jan, warmest – May)

Filipino, English

80% Christians





Nepal

## Nepal

**Distance from Syria:** 2,668 miles    **Capital:** Kathmandu  
**UN Member:** 14 December, 1955; first UN Peacekeeping since 1958  
**UNDOF:** joined on 19 July, 2013    **Strength:** 72 troops  
**Republic:** 28, May 2008  
**Total area:** 56, 827 square miles  
**Population:** 27.47 million (2012) World Bank)  
**Geography:** home to the world's tallest mountain - Mt Everest  
**Language:** Nepali  
**Religion:** 81.3% Hindu



India

## India

**Distance from Syria:** 2,612 miles    **Capital:** New Delhi  
**UN Member:** 30 October, 1945; first UN Peacekeeping since 1950  
**UNDOF:** joined on March 2006    **Strength:** 193 troops  
**Independence Day:** 15 August, 1947 (independence from UK)  
**Republic:** 26 January, 1950  
**Total area:** 1,269,346 square miles  
**Population:** 1.237 billion (2012) World Bank  
**Language:** Hindi, English  
**Religion:** >80% Hindu



Ireland

## Ireland

**Distance from Syria:** 2,483 miles    **Capital:** Dublin  
**UN Member:** 14 December, 1955; first UN Peacekeeping since 1958  
**UNDOF:** joined on 28 September, 2013    **Strength:** 135 troops  
**Full Independence:** 1949  
**Total area:** 32,595 square miles  
**Population:** 6,378,000 (as at 2011)  
**Average temp:** mean winter (4C-7.6C), mean summer (15C-20C)  
**Language:** English, Irish, Ulster Scots  
**Religion:** 84.2% Roman Catholics



Netherlands

## Netherlands

**Distance from Syria:** 2,044 miles    **Capital:** Amsterdam  
**UN Member:** 10 December, 1945; first UN Peacekeeping since 1948  
**UNDOF:** Two Staff Officers rotate every six months)  
**Full Independence:** 30 January, 1648    **Kingdom of Netherlands:** 1815  
**Total area:** 16,039 square miles  
**Population:** 16,785,403 (as at 30 April 2013)  
**Average temp:** >0C (November - April) - <30C (June to August)  
**Language:** Dutch, English, Frisian, Low Saxon  
**Religion:** largest - 24% Roman Catholics



# Fiji's Head of State visits the Golan

Fiji's President and Head of State, His Excellency, Ratu Epeli Nailatikau made his first official visit to Fijian troops serving with UNDOF during the period 21- 22 May, 2014.

FIJIBATT



His Excellency the President of Fiji, Ratu Epeli Nailatikau and Commander RFMF with senior officers and soldiers of the First Battalion, Fiji Infantry Regiment, UNDOF

**F**iji's President and Head of State, His Excellency, Ratu Epeli Nailatikau made his first official visit to Fijian troops serving with UNDOF during the period 21- 22 May, 2014. He was also the first Head of a State to visit UNDOF since the current Force Commander; LtGen Iqbal Singh Singha took Office in August, 2012. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau was accorded a 100-men guard upon arrival at Camp Ziouani; where he met and held a meeting with the Force Commander.

He was briefed on operational and administrative matters by FIJIBATT and had the opportunity to visit positions on the Alpha side.

His Excellency the President thanked the men and women of FIJIBATT for their hard work and perseverance and reminded them to always be helpful to members of other contingents and to remain loyal to the Force Commander.

The President was accompanied by the Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, BrigGen Mosese Tikoitoga.



Capt E. Nabogibogi prepares to present the first bowl of "kava" to the President during the traditional welcome ceremony.



Force Commander, Lt Gen IS Singha presents His Excellency, the President of Fiji with a gift from UNDOF.



# FIJIBATT's first medal parade on the Golan

The First Battalion Fiji Infantry Regiment conducted its Medals Parade on 09 May, 2014 in Camp Faouar, which was reviewed by the Force Commander. The DFC, CMS, COS and other UNDOF senior military and civilian staff were also in attendance.

On the fine sunny spring day, the three detachments on parade proudly saluted the marching on of the 1st Battalion Colors, marking 71 years of its first deployment to the Solomon Islands in WWII. During the parade, the FC presented medals to specially selected medal recipients including the front rank of the formation whilst the DFC and COS presented medals to the centre and rear ranks respectively. The presentation of medals will continue on 02 July to soldiers based in field positions outside Camp Faouar. LtGen I.S. Singha lauded the soldiers for their loyalty, dedication and commitment in the Northern Area of Operations. "Since your induction, I have closely monitored the activities of the Battalion in UNDOF and I am proud to say that FIJIBATT have excelled in the role as loyal, dedicated and committed Peacekeepers in the Northern Area of Operations," he said. "Operationally FIJIBATT has performed with distinction. They have reopened and occupied Position 32A and taken over Position 62. FIJIBATT is deployed in 15 Positions and one Observation Post to give protection to UNTSO observers. This is the maximum that any Battalion has occupied since the inception of UNDOF 40 years ago," he further added.

He was later presented with a token of appreciation; a Fijian war club that was carried by the lead warrior, PTE Sekove V. Lagi, who led the traditional Fijian war cry before the end of the ceremony.



FIJIBATT







# FIJIBATT Resumes Foot Patrols

A team consisting of 3rd Coy and E.O.D personnel were tasked to refurbish and clear foot patrol routes in order to resume foot patrol taskings. These routes were last used by ASUBATT before the Syrian crisis.

The season of spring ushered in warmth that was truly missed by the Fijian Battalion, most of whom had experienced their first winter. This warmth was not more welcomed than in the Northern AO of FijiBatt under the command of 3rd Company's OC Captain Tevita Biudole.

Operations in the AO since the escalation of the Syrian crisis had been restricted to mounted patrols and escorts. On the insistence of both parties from Alpha and Bravo side, UNDOF was to re-activate its foot patrols along the Alpha Line.



Where to now? EOD team and members of 3rd Coy try to locate the old patrol route.



Moving with caution...using mine detector

The elements had taken its toll on the barrels along the Alpha Line and a rapid refurbishment was needed. In addition to the refurbishment patrol routes (Foot) needed to be cleared. A team consisting of 3rd Coy and E.O.D personnel were tasked. The last time these routes were used, was before the Syrian crisis whilst the Austrians were here.

The challenges faced by the team were mines and the unforgiving terrain. It is worthwhile to mention that this operation was only a few weeks after the IED attack on IDF personnel near Barrel X-Ray 4 within the 3rd Coy boundaries. Beginning

North of Position 16 at Barrel Yankee 3 the team worked tirelessly towards the Southern target which was Barrel Victor 7.



Now that's better...It reads Y5 doesn't it?



Oops...I found something interesting...

Within 72 hours and 8 kilometres later the task was completed and the routes deemed safe for the foot patrols of 3rd Coy.

Private VAKANAWA (Job) was the lead scout for the team. He shared this- "I am proud to be part of the team preparing the way for operations along the Alpha Line knowing that it will be safe for my comrades' who will follow in the future."

*Article and Pictures by: Capt Julian Toganivalu and 3rd Coy personnel*

# Phillipine Assessment Team visit troops on the Golan

The Philippines Assessment Team delegation from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the National Council for United Nations Peace Operations (NCUNPO) visited the 7th Philippine Contingent on the Golan (7PCGH) in Camp Ziouani on 26 June, 2014. The aim of the visit was to come up with an assessment on the general state of troops in the mission area.

In a traditional military Foyer Honour, MGen Oscar Lactao and Commodore Rafael G. Mariano were both welcomed by LtCol Ted B. Dumusmog, Commanding Officer 7PCGH. They were also welcomed by the Force Commander, LtGen Iqbal S. Singha and Col Ezra James P. Enriquez, UNDOF Chief of Staff before briefed on the general situation in UNDOF's area of operation.

The 7PCGH tour of duty on the Golan has been extended to another three months, after serving for six months since December 1, 2013.



MGen Oscar Lactao is escorted by CO PHILBATT, LtCol Ted Dumusmog

COS UNDOF greets Commodore Rafael G. Mariano



Force Commander LtGen IS Singha holds discussions with the Assesment Team



# LOGBATT Changes Command

LtCol Arun Kalia 16th Rotation, INDCON took over the command of LOGBATT from LtCol Sanjeev Haryal, SC 15th Rotation, INDCON in the presence of Lt Gen IS Singha, VSM, Force Commander and Head of Mission , UNDOF on 28 June 2014 at Camp Ziouani.

It seemed like it was only yesterday that the 15th INDCON rotation took over command from the 16th rotation. With only one week left to end his mission, the outgoing CO LOGBATT handed over command to the incoming Commanding Officer, LtCol A. Kalia.

LtGen IS Singha thanked the outgoing CO LOGBATT, LtCol Haryal for a job well done under his tenure and welcomed the 16th Rotation Command. LtCol Haryal expressed how under his fruitful command of seven months, the 15th Rotation has worked hard, excelled and prevailed in the present security scenario as per the mandate of UNDOF. He also wished good innings to LtCol Arun Kalia and his team. LtCol Arun Kalia, on the other hand, also expressed his deep gratitude and sincere thanks to the chief guests Mrs Baljeet Singha and Lt Gen Iqbal Singh Singha, VSM, Force Commander and Head of Mission, UNDOF and all esteemed for sparing their valuable time to attend the ceremony. He expressed good wishes and solidarity for 16th Rotation, INDCON and conveyed his sincere thanks to towards the outgoing CO, Col Sanjeev Haryal, SC and his rotation, and wished them good innings back at home..





## IRECON - Five mile race in Camp Faouar

On 31 May 14 the Irish Force Reserve Company hosted a 5 Mile run in Camp Faouar. The run which consisted of five circuits of the camp was open to all nationalities and saw almost one hundred participants take part. The event was organised and co-ordinated by Cpl Sean Kane of the FRC with help from other members of the Irish contingent.



IRECON

## GOC 1BDE visits... Cavalier - Lt Angela Lyons



The CO IRECON, LtCol Paul Kennedy briefs the GOC 1Bde, Brig Gen D. Fitzgerald at the Shouting Place on 13 May 14.

Lt Angela Lyons, the Recce Section Commander. She patrols the Golan in a spectrum of detailments from Force Commanders Escorts to routine Quick Reaction Response Tasks - A Patrol Commanders Professionalism Epitomised.



# UNTSO World's Strongest Viking!

If you ask the UNMOs in UNTSO what they do when they have leave, you would probably get around 160 different answers. For PER GUNNAR ROALKVAM (NOR) it's all about strength sports such as strongman, powerlifting and others. He normally visit a lot of competitions when he is working back home, and now that he is deployed here to OGG-D he tries to schedule his leaves so that he can go to the strongman competition. He missed The World's Strongest Man this year in March, but he will go to several other competitions as either crew or spectator later this year.

He has also for the last 7 years been part of the team arranging Norway's Strongest Man and international Giants Live competitions in Norway and other countries. During his first leave this year in the beginning of April he was head of the crew arranging Giants Live, World Strongest Viking up at a mountain resort at Fefor in Norway. Twelve athletes from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, Island and England were battling for the title surrounded by snow and ice covered mountains and cold conditions. The events included;

**front hold**; where the athletes had to hold a 25kg sword in front of them as long as possible, **sled pull**; where they had to pull a 900kg timber sled on the snow 25 meters as fast as possible, **log press**; with a big 130kg log for reps, **loading** of natural stones to a platform, **pole push**; where you try to push your opponent out of a ring, and finally **Atlas stones**, with a 180 kg round stone to be lifted twice over a tall wooden fence. The athletes finishing top three would be qualified to next year's world strongest man competition.

The arena was outdoors and there was also as small Viking village, Viking ship and a highland games competition with a qualifier for Highland games world championship this summer at Andoya, Norway.

The winner was one of his friends the Icelandic giant Hafthor Bjoernson, 208cm tall and 185kg. He was in the top at every event and especially the sled pull he really showed he is the world strongest Viking. Many of you will soon

get to know him as "The Mountain" in season four of Game of Thrones on HBO. Second place was surprisingly the Swede David Nystroem with a record breaking front hold and a superb log press. At third came the veteran Terry Hollands, of Dartford England.

After the competition there was a traditional "Viking blot" (party) with Mjoed (beer brewed on honey) and a lot of happy Vikings.



130 kg log press...more painful than it appears



...the winner

*Article and Pictures by: PER GUNNAR ROALKVAM*



Fefor landscape...





The Panel of seasoned COE Staff from missions across the globe

An opportunity to upgrade the skill sets required while tenanting the appointment of Deputy Chief of Integrated Support Services (DCISS) was a welcomed one. A training workshop on Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) in New York from 22 – 27 Jun 14 was not only professionally stimulating but also a challenging one, for I was one of the two military officers on the Panel of Seasoned COE Staff from missions across the globe. Guidance from the mission, coupled with self-study gave the base foundation for the event.

The vast experience of the Panelists and the presentations of various Section Heads from DFS and DPKO were soaked in practicality and echoed forward thinking. The finalization of the COE manual and review of COE implementation guidelines was another mind stimulating exercise which was well conducted with the collective inputs and brainstorming sessions.

For me this training turned out to be a “Duet” of Professional satisfaction as on the final day, in the midst of a discussion, I received a message notifying my approval to the rank of a “Full Colonel”.

The visit to the UNHQ was rewarding indeed. It also gave the rare opportunity of meeting various important appointment holders concerning logistics/ force generation.

Lastly one also got a feel of the respect and the aura commanded by the United Nations in New York City while taking a stroll down the Times Square. The “UN Billboards” shone apart amongst the glitter.

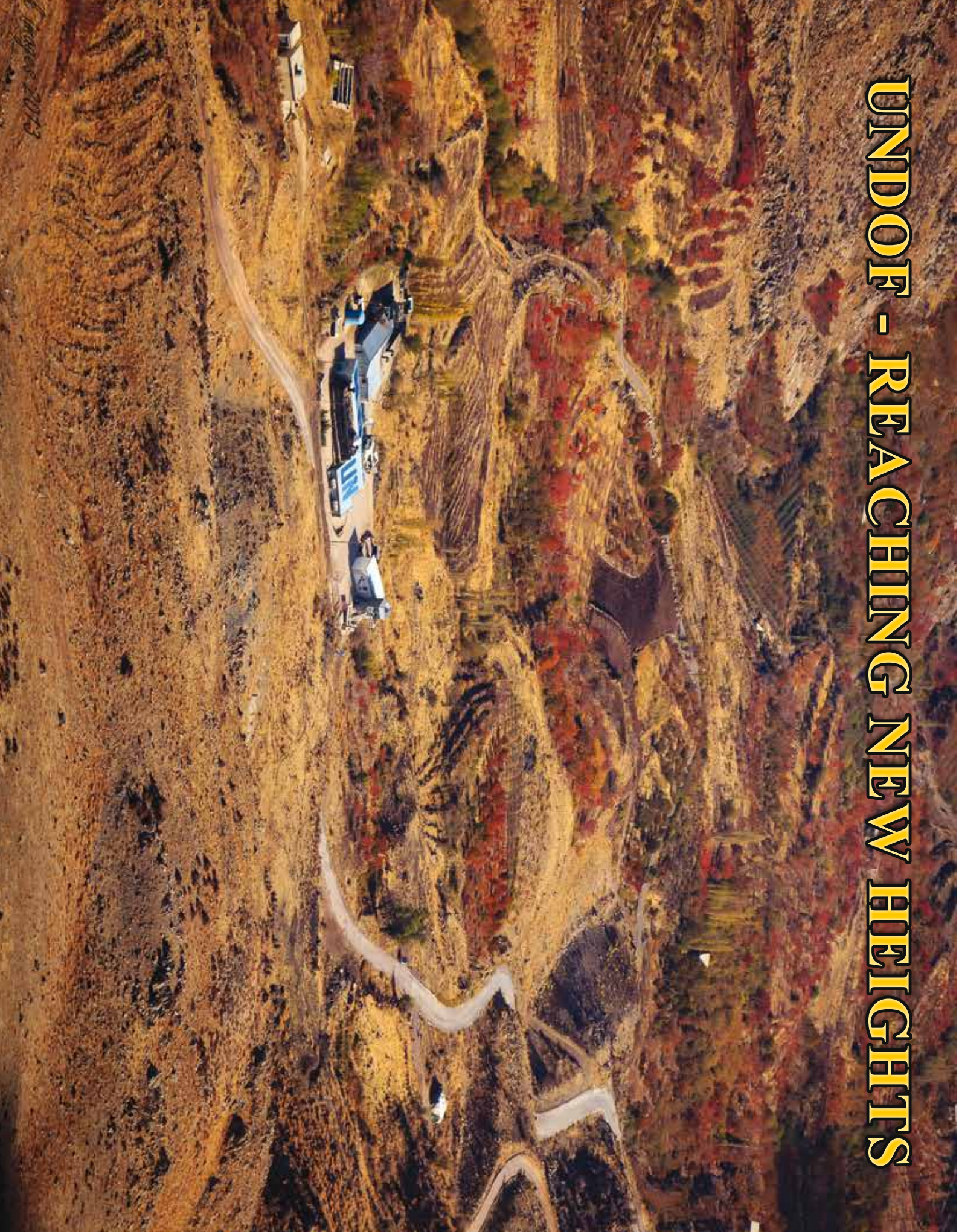


The PUN Billboards in Times Square, New York city

Article and pictures by: LtCol Harinder Singh Billing, DCISS



# UNDOF - REACHING NEW HEIGHTS



Images 2013