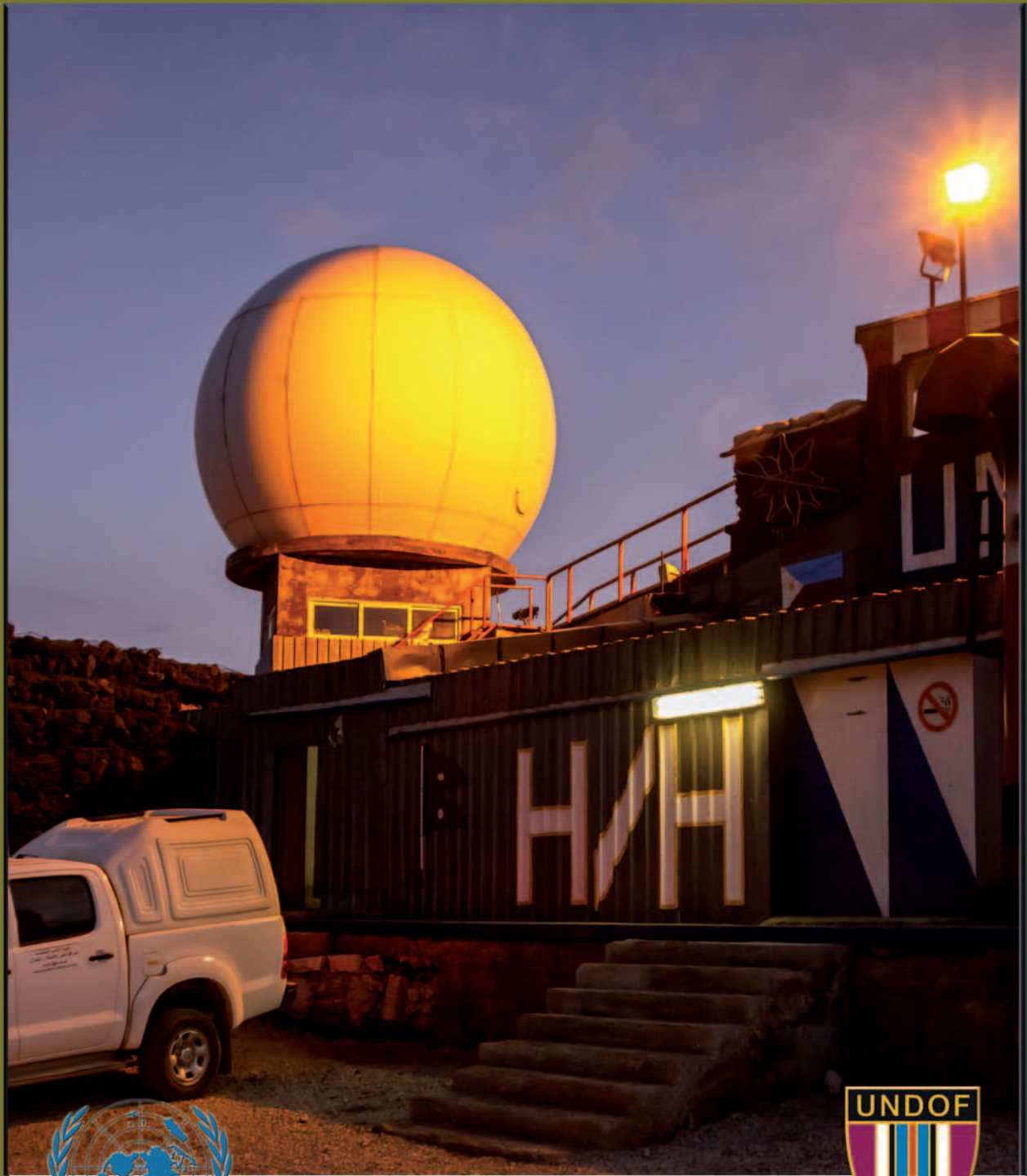


GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



July - September 2014
No. 140



DEAR READERS !

The world is a small place!

"Namaste","Bula", "Kamusta" and "Hello". It is indeed my pleasure and privilege to give my regards to all the readers via this editorial column. As I have taken over as SOPR for UNDOF for a year. I hope I receive all the support and guideline as my predecessor and I do look forward for inputs and suggestion from all the members of the UNDOF to maintain our mission magazine "GOLAN" Journal.

Completing her tour of duty, Maj D.W.Tove displayed her professionalism, dedication and commitment to the mission and FIJIAN Army. It is an honor to appreciate her hard effort for the GOLAN journal, UNDOF 40 year photo book and my special personnel regards for her support during handover and takeover. Now I welcome all the new staffs, both military and civilian and new members of NEPCON and Fiji Contingents. I wish all the best to incoming peacekeepers, hope we meet the standard set by our predecessors and leave no stone unturned to fulfill the mission mandate.

Last month has been very crucial and decisive for the mission, where our leadership have lead the troops in a dynamic and professional manner to maintain the security of the UNDOF peacekeepers, with a goal of "One mission, One Team, One Goal".



Finally, "Goodbyes" to all the members who have left and are leaving the mission after completing their tour of duty. We wish them very best for the days ahead and as we know, "the world is a small place", we will definitely meet our old friends someplace in this small world. Till then:

"CHEERS"!

SINCERLY



MAJOR AMIT SINGH GURUNG
UNDOF SOPR

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Photo by Sgt Tomas Delana

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The Golan Journal is the magazine of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and it is intended to provide information about the Force and events within it which are of interest to its members. The UNDOF Media/ Public Relations Office publishes the Golan Journal quarterly. While articles and photographs are welcomed from all members of the Force, the view and opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily coincide with those of the United Nations or the Force Commander.

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Last three months were indisputably the most critical chapter in UNDOF history. We witnessed the events which will remain etched in our hearts for long. The circumstances, which led to repositioning of Force HQ, could not have been dealt in a better way. Hard work, commitment, teamwork and solidarity displayed by each peacekeeper were truly inspirational. I remain extremely proud of everyone in UNDOF team who executed the gargantuan task seamlessly. It was heartening to witness peacekeeper from diverse TCCs coming together and sharing the tribulations. We rose to the challenge and helped each other in getting back to our jobs with unparalleled zeal and ever increasing dedication.

Harmless release of Fijian peacekeepers who were taken as hostages was a testimony of immaculate diplomatic and professional acumen of UNDOF with a resounding support from UN HQ at New York. FIJIBATT was quick to relocate to its new location. After having played vital role in transporting peacekeepers and equipment from the B side, the Fijians prepared themselves for new challenges.

PHILBATT after having productively concluded their tenure went back to their nation. The contributions made by the Filipinos will be written in golden words in the history of UNDOF. Selfless service of PHILBATT in ensuring peace in Golan will remain an inspiration for other TCCs.

After rendering an immense service to UNDOF, IRECON rotated its troops and I appreciate the dedication and dynamism displayed by the outgoing IRECON contingent. I would like to put on record their successful efforts in relocating peacekeepers safely to A side. I am sanguine that the incoming IRECON will be geared up soon to meet the challenges.

INDCON embraced the FHQ compliment and peacekeepers from other contingents with open arms. Right from vacating their living barracks, closing down their recreational areas, and providing responsive logistic support, they did everything to make other contingents comfortable.

NEPCON continued to hold Hermon complex despite deteriorating situation on B side. I am sure that the new rotation having been fully trained in nuances of their job are ready to face the winters while discharging their duties. I am genuinely overwhelmed with the grit and determination of international and national civilian staff of UNDOF. I want to place on record the selfless service being put in by the civilians on the B side who continue to work from Damascus despite the present turmoil.

Finally, I would once again like to thank each one of you for your contribution in ensuring safe relocation of Force HQ. Together we will aspire to achieve lasting peace in the Golan.
Thank You, Vinaka, Dhanyavad, Shukran , Toe dah!

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

DEPUTY FORCE COMMANDER ADDRESS



Hello UNDOF, I am proud and privileged to serve alongside you in this long established and prestigious United Nations Mission. It is a great honour for me and for my country Ireland, to be appointed as your Deputy Force Commander. I look forward with much anticipation and optimism as together we face into the considerable challenges ahead for all of us as in this period of consolidation and reconfiguration.

Since arrival into the Mission I have been overwhelmed by the warmth of your welcome and the kindness and hospitality extended to both me and my MA. It would also be remiss of me at this point not to pay a special tribute to my predecessor, Brigadier General Harri B. Basnet, for his outstanding contribution to UNDOF and his leadership during the recent turbulent operational times. General Harri's guidance and advice has benefitted me enormously and enabled my quick understanding of what tremendous work has been done and what type of challenges are facing all of us as we move on with our important work.

I also take this opportunity to thank our Force Commander and Head of Mission, Lt Gen I S Singha, for his welcome, guidance and advice. This is a particularly challenging time for all of us and I am filled with great confidence by his vision and strength. It is clear to me that UNDOF has, and continues to be, in the safest possible guiding hands. General Singha, Sir, it is an enormous privilege to serve under your leadership. Finally, I must thank my friend and now colleague, Mr. Bernard Lee, our Chief of Mission Support. Bernard and I served together in UNMIL (Liberia) where we forged an excellent working and personal relationship. The wonderful welcome I received from the CMS and his Team is deeply appreciated. I look forward to working alongside the Mission staff under the capable leadership of the CMS.

In conclusion, I want to assure you that I will give of my best efforts at all times to ensure the continued success of the Mission. I look forward to supporting all of you in achieving our shared intent of One Mission, One Team, One Goal.

Go raibh maith agaibh agus beir beannacht (Thank you and stay strong).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Tony Hanlon" on the first line and "Brigadier General" on the second line.

Brigadier General Tony Hanlon
Deputy Force Commander, UNDOF

Chief of Staff's Prologue



As your Acting Chief of Staff, it is a great privilege addressing the gallant members of UNDOF in this journal. I am grateful for the brilliance and guiding ways of the Force Commander and Deputy Force Commander, paving for my quick integration in the Operational branch of the Mission during the times when the Mission was facing the brunt of the Syrian crisis. I marveled at how professionalism exudes from everyone in this mission.

I would also thank the principals of UNDOF for their support and steadfastness in the most challenging times in the voyes history of UNDOF. We were able to relocate in an organized and professional manner attributable to the synergised teamwork orchestrated by the civilians and military colleagues of UNDOF.

UNDOF could not have seen more during the last quarter of upheavals, during which the conflict between SAAF and opposition groups in our Area of Operation reached to the brim. The immense professionalism, sincerity to the duty and 'service before self' displayed by every peacekeeper deserves my heartfelt compliments and appreciation. You got the opportunity and you proved yourself upto it.

During the gable end of the quarter, we also bade farewell to brave Filipinos. You were the true ambassadors of your country and the mission will miss you. United Nations and UNDOF along with various stakeholders, continue harder than ever, working towards the peace in Golan and I hope very much that we succeed with the joint efforts for the Mission to return to its place of origin Camp Faouar, in order to continue working shoulder by shoulder with our Syrian colleagues and counterparts.

On a final note, we hope to maintain our heightened state of safety and work as a well-oiled machine while concentrating on carrying out our mandate.

"Deh Shiva Bar mohe Subh Karman se Kabhoon na Taroon"

Lt Col Billing H.S.
aCOS
UNDOF



The new Deputy Force Commander (IRECON)

Brigadier General Tony Hanlon is a native of Drogheda, County Louth, Republic of Ireland. He is an alumnus of the Irish Defence Forces Military College and was commissioned into the Infantry Corps. He is a graduate of the Command and Staff School at the Military College and holds a Master's Degree in Business, a Post Grad diploma in Accountancy and Finance and a Level 10 Post Grad in Strategic Leadership.

Brig Gen Hanlon has held various appointments at home and overseas throughout his career. At home he has served in command appointments at Platoon, Company, Battalion and at Brigade Level. He has also served in a broad range of Staff Appointments in Administration, Operations and Logistics at Brigade and at Defence Forces Headquarters. Prior to his deployment Brig Gen Hanlon held the appointment of Director of Logistics in Defence Forces Headquarters where he was responsible for all aspects of the Defence Forces Supply Chain, Logistics Strategy, Policy and Doctrine.

Brig Gen Hanlon has served in a number of key appointments overseas with the United Nations, the European Union and NATO. He has completed 10 operational tours of duty and has served in a broad range of command and staff appointments in Lebanon, Bosnia, Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, East Timor, Liberia and Afghanistan.

In his most recent mission to ISAF, Afghanistan, Brig Gen Hanlon was the senior staff officer in Joint Coordinated Effects Branch. He was the Defence Forces lead planner for the deployment and redeployment of the Irish Defence Forces contingents in Chad as part of EUFOR Chad /Central African Republic and during the transition to the United Nations MINURCAT Mission. He has been the Irish Defence Forces representative to various international forums and committees and was Chairman of the NATO PfP Logistics Committee for two years.

Brig Gen Hanlon lives in Skerries, County Dublin, Republic of Ireland. He and his wife Mary have three adult children, Louise, Aoife and Darragh. Brig Gen Hanlon has a very wide variety of interests and is a committed sportsman who enjoys rugby, football and the great outdoors. He reads extensively and particularly enjoys history and travel.

Brig Gen Hanlon was appointed to Deputy Force Commander for the UNDOF mission on 20 September 2014.



The new Chief Operation Officer (IRECON)

Lt Col Colm Ó Luasa joined the Irish Defence Forces in 1986. He is a Cavalry Officer and a graduate of the Senior Comd and Staff School of the Irish Defence Forces Military College. He holds a Master's Degree in Leadership Management and Defence Studies from the National University of Ireland (Maynooth) as well as a Bachelor of Commerce (Hons) Degree from the National University of Ireland (Galway). He has commanded a number of units and has also served as an Instructor in the Military College in both the Infantry School and the United Nations Training School Ireland (UNTSI).

Prior to his present appointment he served as OIC of Planning and Management Section of the Training and Education Branch of Irish Defence Forces HQ. Lt Col Ó Luasa has served in various missions overseas including INTERFET/UNTAET (East Timor), UNMIL (Liberia) and EUTM Somalia. Lt Col Ó Luasa is married and has four children.



The new Chief Transport Officer

Mr. Inge Sodahl was born in June 1958 in Northern Norway, and has a career of almost 28 years of service with the UN. Following four early assignments of military service with the Norwegian Maintenance Company in UNIFIL Lebanon during 1980 – 83, he joined the UN as a civilian staff member in January 1989. Having served in missions like MINURSO Western Sahara, UNLB Italy, UNIKOM Kuwait and UNIFIL Lebanon, he was selected as UNDOF CTO as of July 2014.

His hobbies include collection and upkeep of Vintage Cars, reading, and mountain biking. He is married with one son.

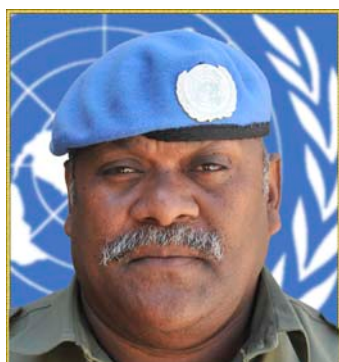


The new Commanding Officer FIJI COM (CO FIJICON)

Lt Col Isoa LOANAKADAVU, MSD, Dip Def Strat, psc, FEME, was born on 7th September 1965, in Vunisea, and originally from Muani, Tavuki, Kadavu, Fiji Islands. He was enlisted into the Republic of Fiji Military Forces on 15th May 1989 and commissioned as an officer in 1993.

He has served and held command appointments with the Multinational Force & Observer (MFO) Sinai, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), Military Liaison Officer during the Bougainville Crisis in Papua New Guinea, United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNMISET), and United Nations Administrative Mission in Iraq (UNAMI). His current deployment to UNDOF is his fifth tour of duty overseas. His last appointment prior to joining UNDOF was as a Battalion Commander.

In addition to his peace keeping medals Lt Col LOANAKADAVU also holds the General Service Medal (GSM) and the Meritorious Service Decoration (MSD) Lt Col LOANAKADAVU is happily married to Miriama LOANAKADAVU and blessed with three sons.



The new Chief Military Personel Officer (FIJICON)

LT COL Vatimio LEVA was commissioned into the Fiji Military Forces in 1991 after completing his officer training at the Force Training Group. Following his commission, most of his military training was conducted in Fiji. He is also a graduate of the Command and Staff College, Nanjing China.

LT Col V. LEVA has served on numerous appointments within the Fiji Military Forces as Platoon Commander, Officer Commanding, Battalion Operation Officer, and Executive Officer. In 1991, he obtained his first command of the infantry platoon in UNIFIL, South Lebanon and has served on number of TOD with different appointments. He has also served in four peacekeeping missions with the MFO in Sinai Desert, UNMISET in Timor Leste, PMG in Bougainville and UNAMI in Iraq.

LT V. LEVA has also held several administrative, support and operation staff appointments within the Land Force Command HQ. His last appointment prior to joining UNDOF was Chief Staff Officer Service Support.

He is a keen sportsman and reader of current affairs and is happily married and blessed with five children.

Parades in Camp Faouar and Mt. Hermon

Auspicious medal parade ceremony took place in Mt Hermon base, Hermon South, Hermon Hotel and Position 12 on 14 and 15 Aug 2014. Head of Mission and Force Commander Lt Gen. I. S. Singha proudly awarded the UNDOF medal to 67 contingent personnel and 2 Nepalese Staff Officers. He addressed the troops praising them for their hard effort and dedication in their contribution to maintain the peace and security within the Area of Responsibility of UNDOF. He emphasized the glorious bravery of Nepalese contingent in UN PKO worldwide and addressed the troops in Nepalese language, building the pride and morale among the peace keepers. Similarly, UNTSO OGG medal parade was conducted in Camp Faouar on the morning of 15 August 2014, where COS UNTSO Maj Gen Michael Finn awarded medals to 10 military observers of OGG-D.



“SAVIOURS OF THE MISSION”

Saturday 16 August 2014 marked a special day in UNDOF history as the tunes of the RFMF brass band reverberated through the Camp Faouar Parade Square. For the first time ever live Regimental music accompanied the marching on of Fiji batt troops with their Regimental 1st Fiji Infantry Regiment (1FIR) colours, heralding the first change of command for the Fiji Battalion in UNDOF. UNDOF Head of Mission and Force Commander Lieutenant General Iqbal Singh Singha officiated the sombre hand-over between the outgoing CO Lt Col Sitiveni Qiliho and the incoming CO Lt Col Isoa Loanakadavu. The solemn occasion also saw the respective handing over of the Regimental Sergeant Major's Pace stick between the incoming and outgoing RSMs. Lt General Singha, in commending Lt Col Sitiveni Qiliho for his sound leadership remarked: “I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the Commanding Officer 1FIR Lt Col Sitiveni Qiliho for his dedication to duty and leadership qualities that have led to the successful tenure of his battalion. I wish to thank him for his positivity and whole-hearted support to the mission in a much matured manner”. The Force Commander welcomed Lt



Col Loanakadavu stating that he was confident that the second rotation would undoubtedly live up to the high standards set by their predecessors, and will continue to keep the UNDOF flag flying high. He further added that the Fiji Contingent's first rotation took over from the Philippine and Indian Log Battalions on 28 Jul 2013 at a critical time when ‘things were not so good’ in the mission area. Rightfully, the FC added that such was a time when he found it appropriate for him to call the Fijian Contingent as the “saviours of the mission,” he exclaimed. The UNDOF mission was rumoured to close down last summer in 2013 following the high security threats and withdrawal of a number of personnel. Upon the Security Council's call, the Fiji Government approved the deployment of the 1st Battalion and deployed the troops in UNDOF mission area in a record time. Immediate occupation of 15 UN positions and, in addition, OGG Observation Post was the maximum any battalion had ever achieved since the inception of UNDOF 40 years ago. These strings of activities created another page in UN history, as highlighted by FC Lt Gen Singha. Force Commander acknowledged Fiji's timely contribution to the mission at a time when several other contingents were leaving the mission area for

security reasons and domestic political compulsions.

In his farewell remarks, the outgoing CO, Lt Col Qiliho thanked the outgoing troops for their dedication and commitment to the service of peace during the most volatile period to date in UNDOF history. Their steadfast approach to the call of national duty to the Golan Heights at that time was beyond reproach and that they should return home proud of what they had achieved in the last twelve months. He wished the incoming Fiji troops well under the new leadership of Lt Col Loanakadavu and stressed that he was departing the mission confident that the proud legacy of 1FIR would be upheld in the new battalion. Lt Col Qiliho reiterated his farewell speech to his fellow Fijian troops with a famous bible verse from the Gospel of St Matthew: “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God”, whilst equally acknowledging his utmost appreciation to the sound leadership and unwavering guidance of the FC Lt Gen Iqbal Singh Singha.

New NepCon Members - Enhancing UNDOF

New members of Nepalese contingent have joined the UNDOF team from 19 August 2014, enhancing the UNDOF capabilities with the skills of Close Protection Units for the VIP (Personal Security Detachment) of UNDOF. This unit will focus on the protection of Force Commander/ HOM Lt. Gen. Iqbal Singh Singha, VSM. involving Vehicle escorts, provide security during all operational movement of VIP, inner cordon security and maintain coordination with the concerned branches as required, before, after and during the movement of the VIP. Working in the teams concept, this unit have gone to the intensive training in pre-deployment training of six months and have good experience of this duty as they have conducted this role for Nepal's national VVIPs/VIPs.




Beside the above mentioned capabilities, the new NEPCON troops with the strong strength of 73 has arrived and have been relocated in camp Ziouani. They are presently manning one OP and one UNDOF position on the A side.

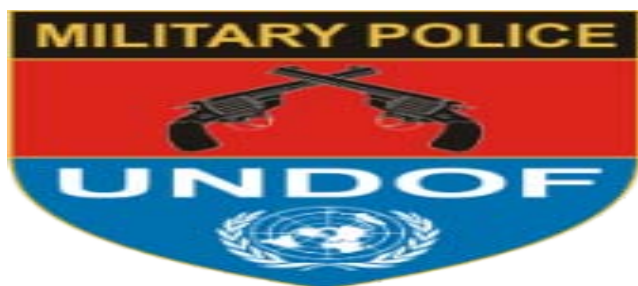


"PATROL, PROTECT, PRESERVE" –FMP

With the motto of "PATROL, PROTECT, PRESERVE", the Force Military Police of UNDOF is the only unit comprised of different contingents within the mission that is called "Mini-UNDOF". Diversity in the composition has in fact become a source of strength of the Unit, as each member has set aside their differences and displayed great sense of camaraderie and team work in accomplishing their common tasks. The Unit's everyday duties cover a range of tasks involving traffic control of the movement, investigations from preliminary fact finding inquiries to fact finding activities, supervision of AOS crossings, power of arrest and detention, search, seizure and, if required, disposal of seized property, and of course empowering the personnel to maintain discipline and security.



FIJIAN		07
INDIAN		08
FILIPINO		11
NEPAL		01
IRELAND		02
TOTAL=		29
Note: Figures may vary due to shared FPM posting		



Headed by LtCol Siddhartha Basu as Force Provost Marshal (FPM), Military Police comprises of three detachments "A","B","C", and the Headquarters' elements based in Camp Faouar, Camp Ziouani and two crossing gates. In order to successfully perform their tasks, the MP Unit conducts frequent training to ensure that each individual MP 'remains current' and employs accepted international best practices. The humble objective is that all UNDOF MPs will enhance their core policing skills in the Mission Area so that TCCs will benefit in the medium to long term through the tangible increase in their MPs individual capabilities and competencies due to their deployment with the UNDOF MP Platoon. The training and activities' range from Commander's meetings to lectures, regular drills and feedback from Personnel on MP performance. The MP Platoon training aims not only to survive but to thrive, as we want all MPs to be empowered and have a meaningful and productive stint in UNDOF. For the MPs - everybody counts!



MPUnit will certainly continue to raise the standards within and strive for excellence and professionalism. The limited capabilities and constraints in resources at times shall not hinder them in answering calls for new and larger tasks. In harmonious coordination with the respective TCCs, proactive measures aimed at obtaining "zero" undesirable incidents in the mission area will be initiated with the emphasis on individual discipline and training that helps to prevent traffic accidents, negligence, breaches in regulations and other violations. Changes will come, your MP is up for the challenge!

Mornings would not be the same...

Till we get back to where we belong...Camp Faouar.

When the footprints of the Syrian crisis started showing in UNDOF Area of Operation in March 2013, nobody expected that it would one day engulf the complete Area of Separation so dangerously that the complete mission would have to be re-located to the A side. This common belief was based on the reasoning that an impartial UNDOF was a protective edge for both SAAF and opposition groups and, more importantly, both the parties appreciated the presence of UNDOF in the Area of Separation, lest they end up fighting on two fronts, the second front being IDF.

Contrary to everyone's belief, the Mission faced the brunt of Syrian crisis on 27 August 2014 when the opposition groups got over-shadowed by more radical Al-Nusra. The situation changed drastically with the capture of the only crossing gate between A and B sides by opposition groups dominated by Al Nusra and subsequently abducting 45 Fijian Peacekeepers and threatening two of our southern positions held by Filipinos. The following days would be an operational nightmare for any military commander. They witnessed a series of actions involving temporary vacation of positions/OPs, forced evacuation of peacekeepers, liaison with the stakeholders, negotiations with abductors, all going on simultaneously with progressive appreciation of the opposition group's intent. Amidst this chaos, the release of 45 Fijians on 11 September came as a huge sigh of relief and contributed immensely in easing out the decision making process of core principals of UNDOF. SAAF retaliations diminished significantly during this period and resultantly by 15 September, the opposition groups were almost knocking on the doors of Camp Faouar with their complexion turned hostile towards UNDOF. It was on this day that the hard decision was finally taken to 'temporarily' re-locate UNDOF HQ to Camp Ziouani and vacate all the positions except Mt Hermon and one position in South. Easier said than done, the day stretched the physical and mental limits of every one of us to infinity. Re-location not only involved deliberate planning and packing of mass stores and equipment, it also played with so many emotions and reminds us that one day we will all be back there. Our respect for the innocent Syrian people, love for their beautiful country and longing to get back there are the reasons why we use the word 'temporarily' as prefix to re-location.

Through the medium of this journal, I wish to convey my deepest heartfelt feelings for those Syrians we left behind and it is my prayer that we get back to them one day to repay their immense debt on us 'Inshallah'.



I fondly recall my many encounters with the Syrian people who maintain a love for life and smile through the odds that are against them.

Mornings would not be so innocent and beautiful till we get back there!

Article By: MAJ CHAUHAN KANISHK; ADC TO FC; IND CON

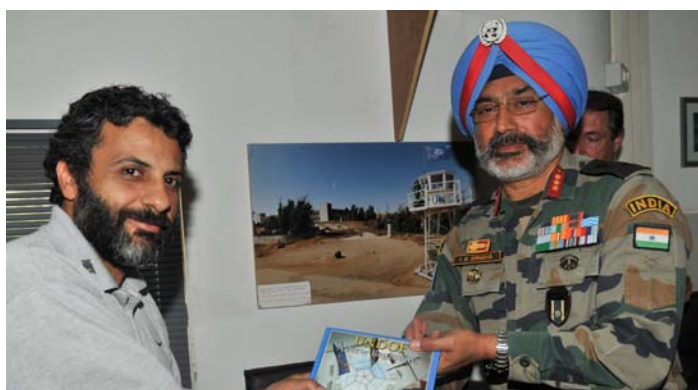
WELCOME HOME:PEACEKEEPERS



The 45 Fijian UN peacekeepers who were abducted on 27 August 2014 were released on the 11 September 2014 at around 1430h at position 80, where the Deputy Force Commander, Brig General Hari Bahadur Basnet received them. They were then received by the Force commander/Head of Mission Lt. Gen. Iqbal S. Singha, VSM on the A gate and lead to Camp Faoura, where on their arrival all the contingents members gathered to applause for their safe return. There on the Camp Faoura square, the Force Commander welcome the peacekeepers, all unharmed and thanked the negotiation teams for their hard effort to bring our comrade peacekeepers back to UNDOF.



On Friday, 12 September 2014, the negotiation team members lead by Mick Lorontzon were welcomed by The Force Commander to hear the UNDOF's Friday morning briefing. After the brief, the Force commander once again appreciated the hard effort put by the team and appraised the Fijian peacekeepers for their commitment, dedication and motivation as peacekeepers in the challenging UNDOF environment. Then the force commander handed the comendation letter, souvenir plaque of the UNDOF and 40 years photo booklet to all the members of the negotiation team.



FC COMMENDATION : PEACEKEEPERS OF THE MONTH

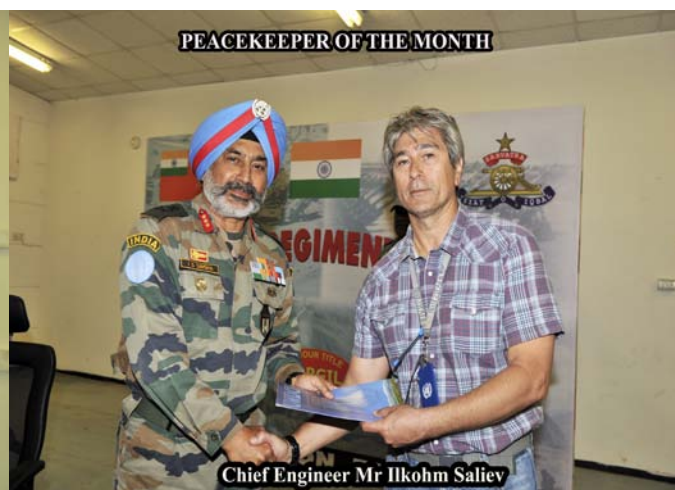
Due to the challenging and volatile environment of UNDOF, the temporary relocation of UNDOF HQ commenced on 7th Sept 2014, with the thinning out process of UNDOF HQ elements. The timely decision taken by the Head Of Mission/Force Commander Lt Gen I.S. Singha, VSM along with his strong supporting team members lead the UNDOF troops to Camp Ziouani for temporary relocation of UNDOF peacekeepers, which ended in 15 Sept 2014. On the 16th Sept 14, a special commendation day was organized by UNDOF, where Force Commander handed special commendations and citations to the peacekeepers for their commitment, dedication, motivation and giving 100 percent and then some for the UNDOF mission. A total of 12 peacekeepers received the commendation (both military and civil staffs) and were announced as the "Peacekeepers of the Month". There and then the FC addressed all the peacekeepers for their hard effort and their supportive action for the mission.





PEACEKEEPER OF THE MONTH

Liaison Officer Alpha Side Major Chris Schumacher



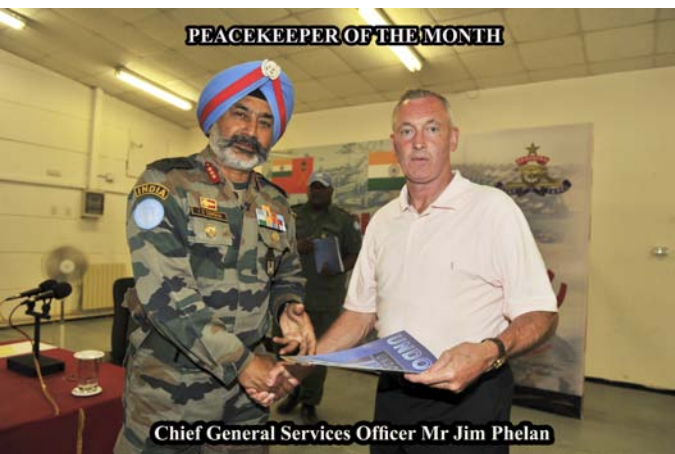
PEACEKEEPER OF THE MONTH

Chief Engineer Mr Ilkohm Saliev



PEACEKEEPER OF THE MONTH

Staff Officer Supplies Major Mevada Smitha



PEACEKEEPER OF THE MONTH

Chief General Services Officer Mr Jim Phelan



PEACEKEEPER OF THE MONTH

Chief of Information Technology Mr Ricardo Manalo



PEACEKEEPER OF THE MONTH

Chief Joint Logistics Operations Centre Commandant Sean Ridge



PEACEKEEPER OF THE MONTH

Chief Supply Officer Mr Anthony Pheneey



PEACEKEEPER OF THE MONTH

Chief Procurement Officer Unit 1 Mr Udal Gurung

PEACEKEEPERS

We are soldiers of peace
Marching on a single crease.
Saving, serving is our religion
This makes it a good decision.

We are soldiers of peace
Marching on a single crease.
Don't look back, there is no lack
Serve not only day and night, but until the sunlight.
It is a combination of nations, so its called United Nations.

One mission, one team, one goal, everyone doing their best,
For the world's peace, we never take rest.

Don't think what will happen, do as you can.
Humanity, hospitality is our aim, come once and assure we peace
again.

We are soldiers of peace,
Marching on a single crease.



Poem by: Sgt BK Jha "DA to FC"

GLIMPSES OF 'TEMPORARY RELOCATION'



FAREWELL PHIL CON



September 2014 saw the end of tour of duty for all Philippine peacekeepers contingent from the UNDOF mission area. The contingent repatriated from UNDOF in a three phase thinning out process. The majority of them repatriated on the first chalk, on 18 September 2014, where the whole mission staffs led by Head of Mission/ Force Commander Lt. Gen Iqbal Singh Singha, along with Chief Mission Support Mr. Bernard Lee said farewell to the PHIL contingent members. All the members of the Nepalese, Indian, Fijian, Irish and Dutch contingents gathered around to wave them off on a safe journey and saluted their dedication, commitment and hard effort they had contributed to the UNDOF mission. The whole contingent finished their repatriation by 27 September 2014. The Philippine contingent joined UNDOF in 2009, replacing Poland contingent. All members of the UNDOF, civilians and military feel honoured to have served along with the Philippine contingent for peace in UNDOF for half a decade of peacekeeping.

LOOKING AND COOKING

August/September 2014 saw the most significant impact to UNTSO operations in the Golan since the Yom Kippur/October War of 1973 and the subsequent establishment of UNDOF. While the crisis in Syria had already forced withdrawal of OP57, OP58, and OP56, it was the capture of the B-Gate in late August and the subsequent capture of SPIDER JUNCTION in early September that demonstrated AGAE had gained conventional military superiority in the central AOS, and the OGG mission to monitor the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement was no longer a realistically achievable task. Conventional war, utilizing the full spectrum of combined arms tore through the demilitarized zone, and one side of the war was not a signatory to the 1974 Agreement. The kidnapping of 45 armed Fijian peacekeepers, and the direct targeting and besiegement of two armed Filipino positions further complicated the situation for unarmed Observers.



On 12 September 14, OP72, along with four other UNDOF positions, was evacuated by night when the battlefield geometry of an AGAE assault onto NEW HAMIDIYAH utilizing heavy caliber weapons posed a significant threat to the safety of UN personnel that could not be mitigated. Awareness of the unfolding situation, that allowed the FC make his decision, was provided by a temporary OGG OP located on Mount Bental. Credit must go to those observers who provided timely and accurate reporting that allowed the axis of assault to be known early and facilitated the decision to evacuate, being made in sufficient time. OP71 and the remaining HQ elements at Camp Faouar were withdrawn to the A-Side the following day when it became apparent that resupply, reinforcement, and CASEVAC would not be possible, and the risk of maintaining a UN force in such conditions, particularly one that could not achieve its mandate was not justifiable. The eventual decision by FC UNDOF to order a withdrawal was a welcome one for unarmed observers in Syria.

A quick reorganization on the A-side was followed by a temporary command restructure that saw OGG operational functions collated in Camp Ziouani. The success of this reorganization was as a result of UNTSO contingency planning, which took place twelve (12) months ago and resulted in the creation of a fully functional backup HQ in Camp Ziouani. The backup HQ was crucial in the success of the UNTSO reorganization and allowed for the smooth continuation of all UNTSO reporting tasks without disruption. The current structure of OGG HQ sees all operational functions located in Camp Ziouani with training and administrative functions centralized at the MAC House in Tiberias. This structure will continue to function until such time as the long term future of operations on the B-Side is decided. While the future of the area remains uncertain, OGG continues with contingency planning, temporary observations posts, liaison and investigations that will assist with maintaining situational awareness and reduce the likelihood of misunderstanding and misreporting that could easily lead to an escalation of a very tense situation in the Golan.

The success of the UNTSO withdrawal from the B Side and subsequent reorganization in Camp Ziouani, is as a result of contingency planning by past and present Military Observers and certainly could NOT have been conducted without the vital assistance of UNTSO civilian staff. Credit must go to the civilian staff who worked tirelessly in the background to facilitate the withdrawal and subsequent reorganization of OGG. UNTSO observers are also very appreciative of the support provided by the soldiers, officers and civilian staff of UNDOF who unstintingly provided for the safety and security of Observers during this very difficult time. The gradual transition of OGG from “cooking and looking” to being in the midst of a volatile conflict in which one party was not a signatory to the agreement, occurred over a period of three years. The subsequent transition to a situation where SAAF no longer had conventional military superiority in the AOS and the newly dominant force had set a precedent of targeting and kidnapping UN personnel occurred over approximately two weeks. It is a timely reminder for vigilance in peacekeeping operations that may appear routine or predictable, and one that will not be quickly forgotten by members of OGG.

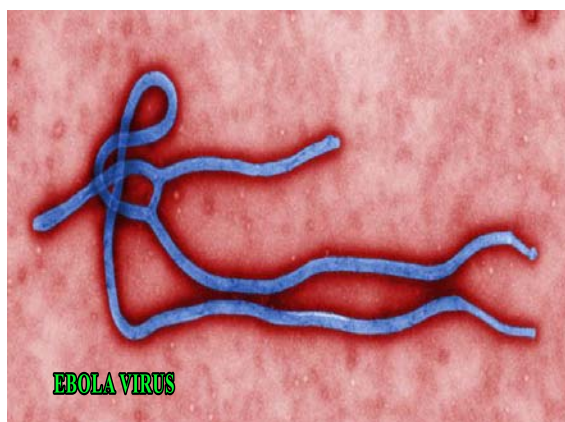
Our thoughts are with the local population that remain in the Towns and Villages where fighting continues to rage and indeed all those who have lost their lives during the past few weeks.

THE EBOLA OUTBREAK

“Money and materials are important, but those two things alone cannot stop Ebola virus transmission. Human resources are clearly our most important need.”

- Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO

In August 28, 2014, the total number of probable and confirmed cases in the current outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EBV) in the four affected countries in Western Africa, as reported by the respective Ministries of Health of Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone is 3,069, with 1,552 deaths. The outbreak continues to accelerate, and the overall case fatality rate is 52%. The present outbreak is the deadliest, eclipsing an outbreak in 1976, the year the virus was discovered. The virus is introduced into the human population through close contact with the blood, secretions, organs, and other body fluids of infected animals. Ebola then spreads in the community through human-to-human transmission, with infections resulting from direct contact through broken skin or mucous membranes, with body fluids of infected people, and indirect contact with environment contaminated with such fluids. Ebola virus disease is a severe acute viral illness often characterized by the sudden onset of fever, intense weakness, muscle pain, headache and sore throat. This is followed by vomiting, diarrhea, rash, impaired kidney and liver functions, and in some cases, both internal and external bleeding. People are infectious As long as their blood and secretions contain the virus. The incubation period, that is, the interval from infection with the virus to onset of symptoms, is 2 to 21 days.



There is no licensed vaccine for EVD available. Patients require intensive supportive care involving rehydration with solutions containing electrolytes or intravenous fluids as well as symptomatic treatment as in other viral illnesses. No specific treatment is available. Hence, in the absence of effective treatment and a human vaccine, raising awareness of the risk factors for Ebola infection and the protective measures individuals can take is the only way to reduce human infection and death. Standard precautions are recommended, which include the basic level of infection control – hand hygiene, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), to avoid direct contact with blood and body fluids, and a set of environment controls. The World Health Organization officials are now estimating that it will be 6 to 9 months before the epidemic is brought to a halt. Furthermore, an Ebola outbreak will only be declared as over in a country “if there have been no confirmed cases for 2 incubation periods, or a total of 42 days”, according to the WHO spokesperson.



Article By: LTC TERESITA DE LOS REYES ;FORCE MEDICAL OFFICER, UNDOF

PHILBATT CONDUCTS TRAINING

The 7th Philippine Battalion concluded a Five day (05 – 09 August 2014) Ammunition and Explosives Handling Training and EOD Senior Technician/EOD Specialist Refresher Training at Camp Ziouani.

The training was divided in two (2) phases; the first phase was attended by PHILBATT Officers and NCOs with the New EOD Contingent from FIJIBATT. This training was designed for military personnel assigned or programmed to be assigned in units directly involved in handling, transporting and storing ammunition and explosives. The subjects tackled during the lecture were: Introduction to Small Arms and Artillery Ammunition, Introduction to Explosives, General Safety Rules, Transportation and Storage of Explosives, Disposal and Destruction of Ammunition and Explosives, and Effects of Explosions. Since all personnel in the mission area are expected to perform multi tasks, such as being part of a Rapid Reaction Team/Group (RRG), which respond to UXO/IED incidents, Explosive Ordnance Reconnaissance Agent training subjects were added like UXO Marking, UXO Protective Measures, UXO reporting and Self Extraction from UXO and Mine Hazards.



The second phase of the training was exclusive for EOD Qualified personnel from PHILBATT and FIJIBATT. The purpose was to refresh and enhance the technical capability of the students on Mine Clearing/Checking Operations and UXO/IED Response. The New EOD Contingent from the FIJIBATT were oriented to UNDOF issued EOD Equipment. The module also included Post Blast Investigation Subjects as both EOD Units shall form part of UNDOF Investigation Team usually tasked to provide UNDOF with investigation reports when incidents of Spill over fires happens on both sides of the Area of Operation. PBI Subjects such as; Intro to Forensics, Post Blast Investigation Techniques, Site Survey and Exploitation and Basics in Site Photography were also discussed during the training.

The training included practical exercises closely monitored by the PHILBATT Training Team led by MAJ REY R EBREO, EOD OPS Officer, to evaluate if the students had applied what they have learned from the Classroom Instructions.

Article By: MAJ REY R EBREO, PHIL CON;UNDOF

IRECON AND UNTSO CASEVAC TRAINING

On 02 Aug 14 the FORCE RESERVE COMPANY (FRC) conducted a joint CASEVAC exercise with personnel from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO), Observer Group Golan Damascus (OGG-D). The joint exercise was designed to test the readiness and CASEVAC capabilities of the FRC and the first aid and reporting procedures of the OGG-D personnel. In order to get the maximum training benefit, neither the QRF nor OGG-D personnel on UN OP 71 had any prior knowledge of the exercise which was initiated by the Joint Operations Centre (JOC). The exercise scenario involved OGG-D personnel being injured in a shelling incident and the QRF deploying within 15 minutes from Camp Faouar to UN OP 71. On arrival at UN OP 71 the FRC secured the Post and the FRC medical team assessed and treated the casualties. The casualties were then transported to a simulated extraction point. The exercise was organised by Capt M. McGrath, Operations Officer FRC, and Capt James Coltheart (Australia) OGG-D Training Officer.



PICTURES FROM THE WALLS OF CAMP FAOUAR



231174 - Preparations OP 20



Deployment from the Sinai



031274 - Camp Faouar



070874 - Medal Parade



CO&A STAFF - AUGUST 1998
CAPT KARL WICKENBERG, 100L CAPT BOB WALKER, 100L WALT STAN WICKENBERG, 100L
CAPT BOB WALKER, 100L CAPT BOB WALKER, 100L CAPT BOB WALKER, 100L
CAPT BOB WALKER, 100L CAPT BOB WALKER, 100L CAPT BOB WALKER, 100L



