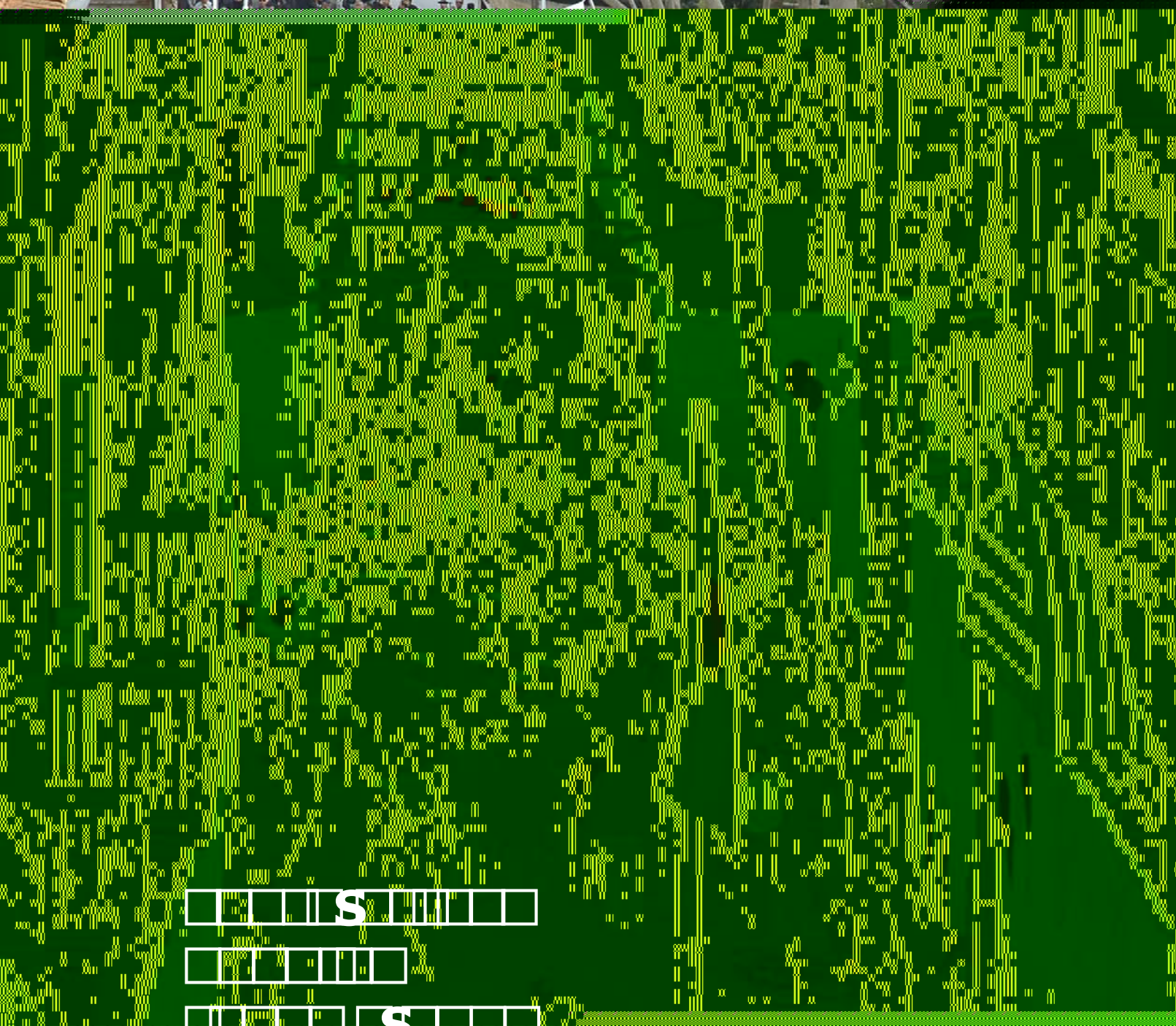


# The Blue Beret

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•A window of opportunity for Cypriots to finally resolve the Cyprus problem is clearly open. With those words, the Secretary-General summarized, in his latest report on UNFICYP, the sentiment that has come to prevail in Cyprus and throughout the international community in the last few months. In renewing UNFICYP's mandate for another six months on 13 June, the Security Council confirmed the Secretary-General's assessment, encouraging the Cypriot leaders to continue working to reach a comprehensive settlement.

The Secretary-General pointed specifically to the agreement of 21 March, the subsequent active engagement in substance, and the joint statement of 23 May as clear indicators of a renewed political will to seek a solution to the Cyprus problem. He commended both leaders for their vision and commitment.

The Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders have indeed achieved quite a lot in a relatively short time. This has justifiably generated much enthusiasm and goodwill in Cyprus and abroad. But continuing progress is not to be taken for granted. A solution is not a foregone conclusion. The Cyprus problem as it is understood today is decades old; entrenched attitudes are still changing; mistrust and mutual suspicion have not completely disappeared. It will take hard work, a spirit of compromise and vision on both sides to achieve a solution.

This is why the Secretary-General strongly encouraged the parties to build on the present momentum and continue using the current preparatory period to identify to the greatest extent possible areas of convergence as well as disagreement, while preparing options, where feasible, on the more sensitive elements for the two leaders to consider once formal negotiations begin. As progress is recorded, it is safe to say that the Cypriot parties will be able to count on sustained interest and support from the international community. For its part, and as the Secretary-General recalled in his report, the United Nations is firmly committed to helping the parties move forward in this Cypriot-owned and led process.



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The leaders of the two communities have shown determination to move the peace process forward, and we are privileged to assist them as they advance on this worthy cause. The head of the UN's mission in Cyprus said at a press conference to mark International Day of Peacekeepers on 29 May 2008.

Responding to questions from the media on when the two leaders are expected to engage in direct talks, Tayé-Brook Zerihoun said: •I think they are the only ones who can determine the degree to which it is realistic or not (to have talks at the end of June). He stressed however that the UN was encouraged by the initiative and commitment the two leaders have shown.

•I think there is also broad agreement that there is also a new environment, conducive to re-engagement and a commitment to see the process through, he said.

•For a conflict that has been around for four decades or more, I think that a month here and a month there should not be an issue, the SRSG said.

He said the UN's view was that since the 21 March 2008 meeting, there has been appreciable movement forward in this process, and pointed out that there has been a narrowing of some of the gaps and perceptions, and also on issues of substance.

•So as long as the commitment is there, because frankly, the political will the parties ... the two leaders ... have shown is one which has changed the state of affairs of the status quo up to now, so we are very encouraged by the process, he added.

•So let's keep the hope alive, and I am certain that the process, the momentum will be kept, and that is extremely important, he said, adding that the progress being made in the technical committees and in some of the working groups should not be ignored.

Zerihoun's comments confirmed the earlier assessment by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs B. Lynn Pascoe who visited the island from 30 March ... 2 April to meet with the two leaders and civil society representatives both in the north and south.

Pascoe said: • There is a very positive tone here in Cyprus at the moment, and a palpable sense of momentum. The two leaders have set their sights on achieving a fair and lasting solution, and I think Cypriots are right to have high expectations. I'm encouraged and I will pass this on to the Secretary-General.



Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs B. Lynn Pascoe



New Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tayé-Brook Zerihoun briefs the media



Following the meeting on 23 May 2008 between Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat and Greek Cypriot leader Demetris Christofias, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tayé-Brook Zerihoun read out the following statement on their behalf:

The Leaders today had genuine and fruitful discussions, and reviewed the results achieved pursuant to the 21 March agreement.

They reaffirmed their commitment to a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality, as defined by relevant Security Council resolutions. This partnership will have a Federal Government with a single international personality, as well as a Turkish Cypriot Constituent State and a Greek Cypriot Constituent State, which will be of equal status.

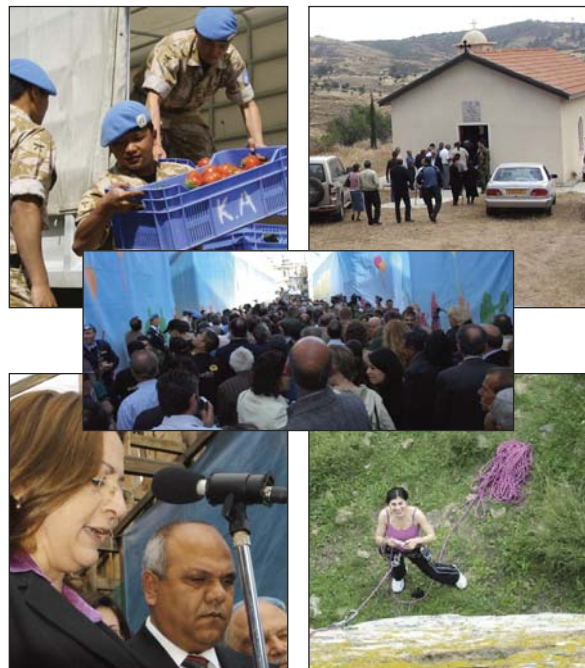
They instructed their Representatives to examine, within 15 days, the results of the technical committees.

The Representatives will consider civilian and military confidence-building measures. They will also pursue the opening of Limnitis/Ye ilşrmak and other crossing points.

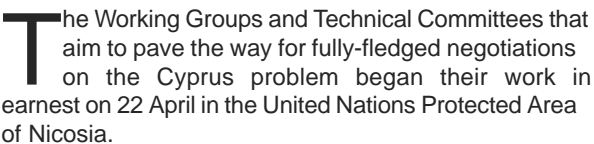
The Leaders decided to come together again in the second half of June to make a new assessment.



23 May meeting of leaders







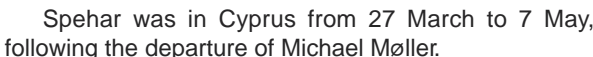
George Iacovou, representative of the Greek Cypriot leader, said he felt a sense of elation as the six Working Groups and seven Technical Committees prepared to kick off their meetings. •Your work could be, and indeed we hope will be, the real beginning of a solution to the Cyprus problem, he said. •The two leaders expect you

to develop ideas on which they can base their direct negotiations under the auspices of the U.N. Secretary-General.

Ozdil Nami, representative of Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat, said establishing the panels was "the easy part." "Our new challenge is much more ambitious," he continued. "Together we have to achieve what could not be achieved in 44 years and reach a comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus issue. To achieve this ambitious goal, we will have to change our ways. We will have to start thinking as a team and not as rivals."

The decision to form the Working Groups and Technical Committees came out of the 21 March meeting of the leaders. The Working Groups will deal with substantive issues of the Cyprus problem, including power-sharing, territory and security, while the Technical Committees will tackle such issues as criminal matters, health and the environment.

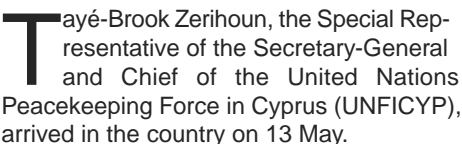
The kick-off of the Working Groups and Technical Committees was one of the highlights of the acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General's tenure.



She joined the Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat in September 2007 as Director for the Americas and Europe Division (AED). Prior to this appointment, she was a senior official with the Organisation of American States (OAS) for over 12 years.

From 1995 to 2004, Ms. Spehar served as the Executive Coordinator of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) at OAS Headquarters in Washington, DC. During 2005 and early 2006, she headed the OAS Electoral Support Programme in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. In February 2006, Ms. Spehar returned to OAS Headquarters in Washington as Director of the Department for the Promotion of Democracy in the newly-created Secretariat for Political Affairs.

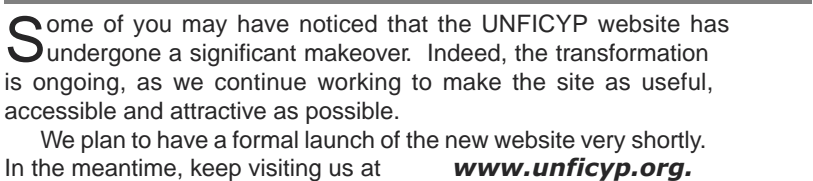
Prior to her initial appointment to the OAS, Ms. Spehar had served as the Head of the Americas Programme of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD) in Montreal, Quebec, Canada (1990-1994).



Mr. Zerihoun comes to Cyprus from the Sudan, where he served as the Secretary-General's Principal Deputy Special Representative in the United Nations Mission in that country (UNMIS). Since joining the United Nations in March 1981, Mr. Zerihoun has worked on special political questions in different capacities and areas, including decolonization, trusteeship, conflict prevention and resolution, peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Between 1995 and 2003, he served initially as Deputy and then Director of Africa I Division in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), with responsibility for the countries of the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes and Southern Africa regions as well as regional organisations. He was then appointed Chairman of the Inter-departmental Task Force for Sudan (ITF) and served in that capacity until becoming Principal Deputy Special Representative with UNMIS.

Mr. Zerihoun is married and is the father of four children.







International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is observed every year on 29 May. This year, the Day coincided with the 60th anniversary of peacekeeping. Marking the Day at a meeting with the media, UNFICYP head Zerioun paid tribute to the thousands of UN peacekeepers who have served in Cyprus over the last four decades. "While history will be the ultimate judge of UNFICYP's success, I believe the work of our colleagues in helping to create conditions that would allow the political process to move forward has been commendable," he said.

Paying tribute to the 178 peacekeepers who have died in Cyprus in the line of duty, the UNFICYP Chief of Mission quoted Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon: "Today,

we recommit ourselves to ensuring that their sacrifices are never forgotten, and the vital work of the blue helmets continues as long as they are needed."

The thousands of men and women who have given their time, energy and commitment in the service of peace in Cyprus under the UN flag can be proud of their contribution, Zerioun said.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in his message to mark the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, said that in the six decades since the Security Council established the first peacekeeping mission, it has developed into a flagship enterprise of the Organisation.

"Today, we have more than 110,000 men and women deployed in conflict zones around the world. They come from nearly 120 countries ... an all-time high, reflecting confidence in United Nations peacekeeping," he said.

The Secretary-General noted that this anniversary is an occasion to celebrate, but also to mourn the more than two thousand and four hundred men and women who have died serving the cause of peace. Just last year alone, we lost 87 brave individuals.

"Each one is a hero," he said.



Taye-Brook Zerioun, flanked by Force Commander Rear Admiral Mario Sanchez Debernardi, addresses media on Peacekeepers Day



- € Established in March 1964, UNFICYP is the longest-running UN peacekeeping mission with troops on the ground (two older missions ... UNTSO in the Middle East and UNMOGIP in India and Pakistan ... have only military observers).
- € Approximately 860 military personnel from more than a dozen countries are deployed along the buffer zone in Cyprus to help maintain peace and stability.
- € UNFICYP peacekeeping and humanitarian support operations also involve a small civilian police contingent, plus approximately 150 civilian personnel from some 30 different countries.
- € The buffer zone stretches 180 kilometres across the

- island, and varies in width from less than four metres in Nicosia to some seven kilometres near Athienou.
- € Some 8,000 people reside in six villages inside the buffer zone. Among these villages is the mixed Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot community of Pyla.
- € The buffer zone includes the United Nations Protected Area, which was declared in 1974 and encompasses the old Nicosia International Airport site and UNFICYP Headquarters, located on the western outskirts of Nicosia.
- € More than 150,000 soldiers have served in UNFICYP since it was established.

"The Blue Beret

For 60 years now, United Nations peacekeeping operations have been helping societies emerging from conflict return to a path of reconstruction and development. The UN's work in Cyprus is an integral part of those six decades of history.

For nearly 45 years, since its inception following the outbreak of intercommunal violence in 1963, UNFICYP has worked to prevent a recurrence of fighting and contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law



Prior to the opening of the Ledra Street crossing point, a mine action team conducts a sweep for unexploded ordnance. The team is part of UNDP's "Partnership for the Future ... Mine Action Centre". It works with UNFICYP's support across the island in an effort to free Cyprus of landmines.



Peacekeepers from UNFICYP's British Contingent make home delivery of welfare supplies to an elderly Maronite woman's home in Karpasha village, in the Kyrenia district



The Buffer Zone within Nicosia follows the "Green Line" drawn across the city on 30 December 1963, when the communities agreed to create a neutral zone between the areas they occupied in Nicosia. This sector reflects the more intensive personnel levels needed for observation and patrol within the built-up areas of the old city, where the buffer zone is sometimes only as wide as four metres.



Villagers in the Maronite village of Kormakitis unload supplies from a UN truck.

and order and a return to normal conditions.

The United Nations has also been active in bringing the sides together in view of reaching a just and lasting settlement.

The photographs below provide a small window on to the daily work of UNFICYP's peacekeepers ... men and women soldiers, police and civilians from around the world ... with the people of Cyprus.



A Civil Affairs team visits a Turkish Cypriot home in the Turkish Cypriot quarter of Limassol. UNFICYP teams make such visits to Turkish Cypriot minority communities ... mainly Roma ... in Limassol and Paphos. They provide language assistance to help individuals get medical care and address housing needs, among other things.



During a weekly welfare visit, an UNFICYP Civil Affairs Liaison Officer is welcomed by one of the Maronite women of Asomatos Village in the Kyrenia district.



Peacekeepers patrolling in Sector 1, which covers a distance of approximately 90 km from Kokkina Village on the western coast to the village of Mammari. The Sector has been the responsibility of an Argentinian Contingent since 16 October 1993. Military Observer Liaison Officers are in daily contact with military counterparts on the two sides within this region.



UNFICYP peacekeepers transport government welfare assistance in the form of food items and pension cheques to elderly Greek Cypriots and Maronite minority communities in the Karpas and Kormakitis regions in the north.

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From the left: George Iacovou, Ozdil Nami, Acting UNFICYP Chief Elizabeth Spehar



The principal officials of Nicosia, Eleni Mavrou and Cemal Bulutoglu, herald the opening of Ledra Street



Crowds watch historic opening from the rooftops

One of the most poignant symbols of the division of Cyprus is once again serving to bring Greek and Turkish Cypriots together. Almost 45 years after the Green Line cut it in half, Ledra Street, in the heart of old Nicosia, re-opened on 3 April amid hope that it could serve as a portent of the reunification of Cyprus.

Speaking at a brief ceremony to mark the event, UNFICYP Acting Chief of Mission Elizabeth Spehar called the opening historic, historic for the hope it represents for the renewal of the peace process in Cyprus, she said. Historic as tangible evidence that what has appeared impossible for decades is, in fact, attainable... if the will to go forward is there. And historic in its symbolism, as the barriers that came to embody the division of this beautiful island finally give way to let all the people of Nicosia come together in the heart of the city.

Spehar said the opening of Ledra Street did not mean the Cyprus problem had been solved. That will require much more work among Cypriots as well as support from all those who wish to see a just and durable settlement in this country, she said. But the opening does give us a glimpse of what is possible when those elements come together.

She added that the United Nations would do its utmost to help Cypriots as they proceeded to shape the future of their country. I sincerely hope that today's historic event will be only one of many markers of progress on that road.

The opening of Ledra Street followed a decision by the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities at their 21 March meeting and crowned weeks of negotiations mediated by UNFICYP.

Advisers to the two leaders, George Iacovou and Ozdil Nami, were present at the opening ceremony, together with the two mayors Eleni Mavrou and Cemal Bulutoglu.

Iacovou said the opening was an important and auspicious occasion. We want it to be auspicious because we aspire to the elimination of crossings and to the opening of all roads in this country for all its



Local and international media capture historic opening

citizens with no obstructions, as a consequence of its reunification, Iacovou said.

It has not been an easy road, in fact, I could say it has been a difficult road to this happy celebratory occasion. But we have overcome [the obstacles] and I hope that we can overcome all the difficulties that we face in the process of finding a solution to the problem of Cyprus that would lead to the reunification of the country and its people, he added.

Nami said the day was historic. We are witnessing the overthrow of one of the obstacles for the reunification of the island. Almost half a century of division has been symbo-

lised here, he said.

I think it's symbolic in the fact that we are now in a new era. A new process has started. It started in a very positive mood. This is a continuation of that positive mood. It also symbolises for me that when Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots can overcome their fears, when they have goodwill and when they start to build trust with one another, they can overcome long-standing disputes and arguments. We are now at a new age, a new understanding and we have to make use of it.

The Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Mayors, Eleni Mavrou and Cemal Bulutoglu, also gave short speeches.

Bulutoglu said that over the years, it was the determination of a string of mayors that kept pushing the politicians to open Ledra Street.

We said we will open this gate without politicians and force it till we get the solution, he said. Today, this had happened.

Mavrou said: No barricade symbolises so strongly the island's division and decades of failed reunification attempts as much as this one, Ledra Street.

It could be the fact that historically, this road reflected the tensions and conflicts between the two communities and, at the same time, their cooperation and friendship. It could be the fact that it runs through the heart of the capital of Cyprus. It could be the fact that while life goes on in both sides, these 70 metres remained frozen in time with the bullet-scarred derelict buildings reminding us of the tragedy of this island.

Mavrou said opening Ledra Street was a much-needed positive step forward that could underpin peace efforts, and generated a renewed sense of hope in both communities.

Reports put at 20,000 the number of people to have used the crossing point in the four days that followed its opening.

Ledra Street is the sixth crossing point to be opened between north and south since 2003.

Sea of people fill the 80-metre stretch of road reconnecting two sides of the city

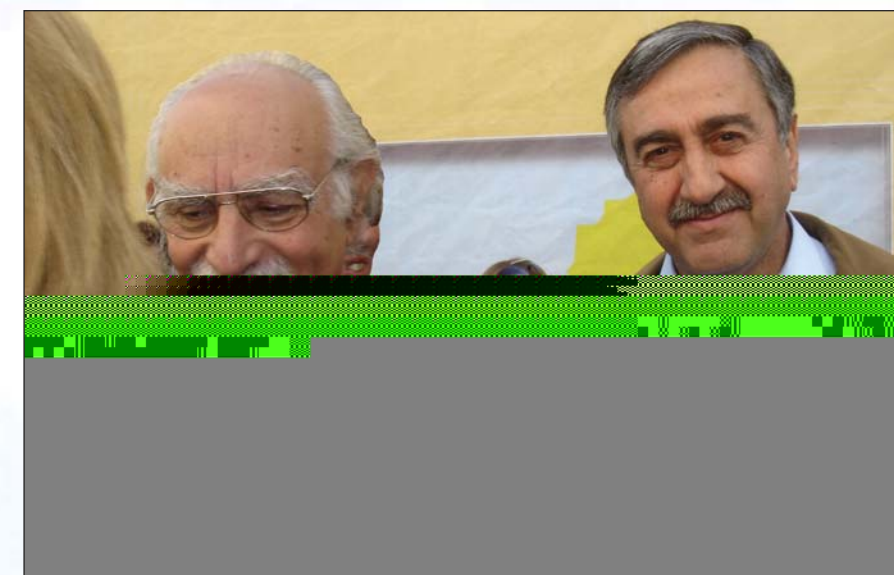




Standing among the crowds waiting for the ceremony to begin, I heard a group of Greek Cypriots who own shops along Ledra Street and its side streets that had been left derelict for over four decades.

Two teenage Cypriot girls ... one Turkish Cypriot and one Greek Cypriot ... had arranged to cross as soon as the checkpoints opened and meet in the middle of Ledra Street. Exclaims of jubilation, hugs and kisses filled the air as they came together in no-man's land but demonstrated they were truly on their own soil.

Nodding to his counterpart Mustafa Akinci, Demetriades recalled how he had been threatened and under attack for cooperating on the Nicosia master plan project connecting the sewage system of the capital.



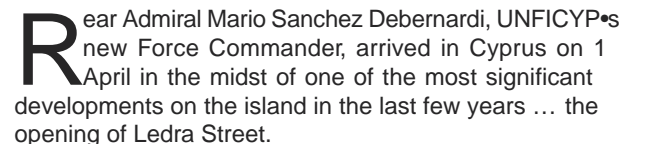
Smiling Akinci said, "Yes, this was not a popular idea, but where there's a will, there's a way, and after 44 years, this has been proven. Cooperation started here 30 years ago when we connected the pipes under this road. Now it's the people connecting above ground and is much more significant. It is not an end in itself, of course, but it is a good beginning and we hope that the Cypriots will have more reason now to believe and work hard

In the two months since Ledra Street or Lokmaci Crossing has opened, over 80,000 people have walked the 80-metre stretch through the buffer zone that has been lined with flower pots of sapling olive trees, past the crumbling buildings that had been covered by sheets with colourful figures and balloons, to the other side.



*Two mayors and their colleagues enjoy a cup of Cypriot coffee after the opening of Ledra Street*



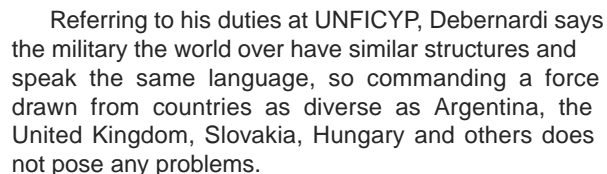


Such recent progress in the peace process makes for an auspicious start to Debernardi's first command of a UN mission. He has worked as a peacekeeper before ... serving as military monitor in the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia from 1989 to 1990 ... but he says being appointed Force Commander is the high point in his professional career.

• I have had important commands in Peru, but nothing as significant as this," he says.

Admiral Sanchez served in a number of different Marine Units in his country, Peru. Throughout the 80s and 90s, he served seven tours of duty as the armed forces fought insurgent groups in Peru. Among his postings, he commanded Peru's 3rd Counter Terrorist Marine Battalion in the Ucayali Region in the country's tropical rain forest, and served as Chief of the Department of Peace Keeping Operations at the Peruvian Joint Command. He was also Chief of Staff of the Peruvian Marine Force, and Chief of the Department of Homeland Security at the Peruvian Joint Command.

Just before he joined UNFICYP, Debernardi served as Director of Policy and Strategy of the Peruvian Ministry of Defence.



The issue of working together with civilian and police peacekeepers in a three-pillar structure is also something he is comfortable with, he said. He points out that in Peru's Ministry of Defence, his chief is also a civilian and there is a coordinating structure for operations similar to UNFICYP's.

•We work with the political leadership, the police and armed forces in Peru for our homeland security,” he adds.

Debernardi says his first impression of the peace-keeping force is that it is running like a well-oiled machine.

Admittedly, he says he is still absorbing the information and notes that the previous Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Rafael Jose Barni, gave to him. •Barni made an excellent presentation and I received a lot of information from him. We only had one day to talk about the mission so we spent the whole day in intensive discussions.Ž

The deluge of information and new faces continued on his arrival in the mission and before he knew it, a month had already passed, he says smiling.

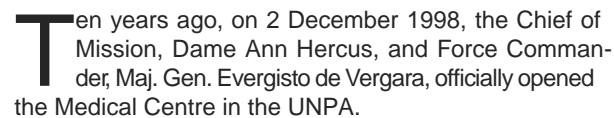
He views the mission as a challenge where he has to engage with many actors and military counterparts at various levels.

• I always say that being in the military, we are trained for a war, but we are the people who will never want a war, so we always try to maintain peaceŽ, he says. Reflecting on his own experiences in Peru, he says, •We had serious problems in the 80s and 90s with terrorist groups as well as problems with our neighbours in the south and north ... we are prepared and trained for war, but always think in terms of peace.

•We don't live alone in this world and our actions affect each other to a greater or lesser degree," he continues. •My country is a member of the United Nations, and if the organisation needs us to keep the peace in the world, then that is our duty.

• I think I arrived at a very special moment for the mission, and it would be wonderful for peace to be achieved during my command," he says.

***Netha Kreouzos***

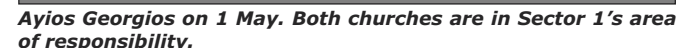
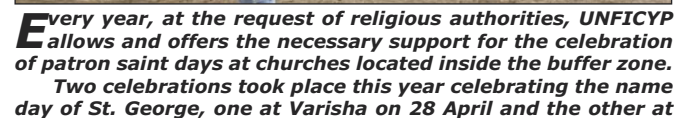
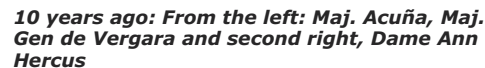


It provided first line and routine medical cover for UNFICYP military, police and civilian personnel and BRITCON dependents, an average of 100 patients each month.

Then, this international medical centre was staffed by 1/Lt. Anibal Acuña (MD), Sgt. Walmsley and Cpl. Watts.

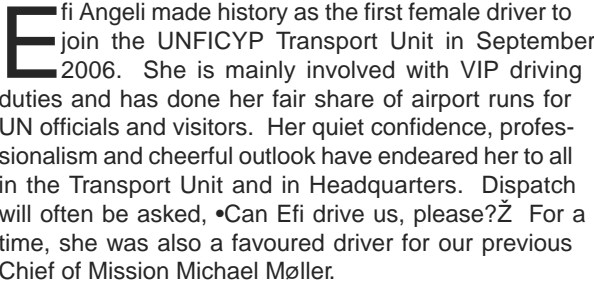
Today, the centre provides cover for an average of 85 patients per month. It is still staffed by two British army nurses, Sgt. Elizabeth Scorse and Cpl. Rachel Staples, from the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps. The Senior Medical Officer at present is 1/Lt. Sebastian Patricios, an orthopedic surgeon specializing in trauma, who arrived from the central military hospital in Buenos Aires in April 2008. This is Sebastian's first tour with UNFICYP, however he has served for six months in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

The first SMO, 1/Lt. Acuña, now holds the rank of Major, and is a renowned surgeon (specializing in hand surgery) in Buenos Aires. He is currently the chief of the trauma section in the Argentinian military hospital (HMCM), and Sebastian considers himself fortunate to have received a thorough insight into the situation in UNFICYP and the experience gained by Maj. Acuña 10 years ago.



*Both events ran according to plan, demonstrating once again the excellent cooperation of the three pillars in their attempt to return the buffer zone to normality.*



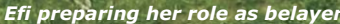


But even as she was driving the Chief of Mission, Efi was already eyeing the trucks lined up in the car park. It wasn't long before she passed her Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) licence and is now a regular driver on the Long and Short North Wind Patrols, the former taking Government supplies to the Greek Cypriots in the northern part of the island, and the latter taking supplies to the Maronite community in Kormakiti.

It is not surprising then that when she got talking to some rock climbers a couple of years ago, she found herself immediately interested in this risky pursuit, despite the fact that she is terrified of heights.

•To overcome your fears, you have to challenge them," she says.

Efi decided to enlist on the 1st Stage Course in Rock Climbing involving theory and preparation for an 18-metre climb up the side of a small mountain with only a rope, a helmet and some metal bits and pieces to stop her from falling.



Her first climb was an exercise in automated terror. I didn't look up and I didn't look down and kept my nose in the rock. Halfway through I wanted to give up and get down, but my trainer pushed me to carry on until I completed the climb.Ž

The next day she somehow found the courage to climb again but this time, something clicked. She saw views that took on a different perspective from high up on the side of a steep rock, and with a bit of a rush, knew that this was going to be her passion.

Since this revelation, rock climbing and mountaineering have become a major part of her life. No need to ask Efi what she is doing this weekend, because we know it invariably involves hanging off the side of a sheer rockface with the aid of a piece of string!

It is generally accepted in Transport that her choice of hobby clearly indicates the woman is crazy, but what about her two sons? Are they proud of her or do they think she is simply mad?

•Both, I think. They are very proud of me but neither of them is tempted to join me on a climb. My partner James is also very supportive, but he has to be because he's always out kite surfing.

Her mother crosses herself and sighs •Panayia mou.Ž (Oh my goodness!)

To be a rock climber you have to be physically fit, so Efi is always training and perfecting her technique to progress through the different grades. Weekends are often taken up climbing difficult routes as part of her development.

Climbers always work in pairs. One climbs and the other takes the role of •belayerŽ, controlling the rope attached to the climber, thereby preventing him from falling to the ground.

There are only so many rocks in Cyprus, so Efi often travels. Her favourite trip was the Kalimnos climb during the 2006 Petzl Rock Fest, an international competition. I watched world class climbers who encouraged us and gave really informative talks in the evenings. It was a good experience to try different climbs and routes in a new environment.

But climbing has become more than just a relaxing pastime for Efi: she has become a member of the Cyprus Search and Rescue Team and the Greek Mountaineering Association. Though these are volunteer organisations, in the event of a disaster, she could be called up to take part in a rescue operation at any time. Last year, she was on standby during the fires that raged in Greece.

Her training for this work involved a rigorous eight-day course in the Austrian Alps last year where she gained her certificate in mountain rescue techniques to search and locate victims and get them to paramedics for medical treatment.

- The views were beautiful and we stayed in Alpine huts, but the worst thing was the shower we had to have in ice cold glacial water every morning.

And, as a way of relaxation, she told us all about the basic •canyoningŽ she indulged in, also known as gorge walking. And •rappellingŽ ... when you throw yourself down a bottomless gorge for excitement.

Her best and worst moments were one and the same time. She was testing herself to move up a grade, and half way up the crag, she slipped and swung out over an overhanging rock. She fell eight metres and was left swinging from the rope, upside down. The only thing that stopped her from falling any further down was her climbing partner, who held onto the rope while our fearless and angry Efi forced her way back up the rock and successfully completed the climb.

In progressing up a grade, she suffered her worst fall and was black and blue for the next two months. At the same time, she describes the experience as pure exhilaration!

## And what about future challenges?

- I hope to walk the 750 km trail of Camino de Santiago.

Efi, whatever rings your bell!

**Christine Iacovou**

*NB The Camino de Santiago is an ancient pilgrimage trail in northern Spain.*



**"SISIS"**

In an effort to support UNFICYP staff, Marfin Popular Bank (Laiki Bank) are pleased to announce the installation of an ATM machine located at their premises in the UNPA.

UNFICYP staff now have continued access to their banking requirements on a 24-hour-a-day basis. Services include cash withdrawals, bill payments, outward transfers, mini statements, request for cheque books, etc.

The ATM machine has been fully operational since 30 May 2008.

**Chief Finance Officer Husein Moussa with Koulla Themistocleous, Supervisor with the Marfin Popular Bank Branch at UNFICYP Headquarters**



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Nicolas von Ruben was appointed UNFICYP's Chief of Mission Support on 4 May 2008.

He has served in peacekeeping since 1994 when he started as an engineer in UNPROFOR. From there, he moved to the UN mission in Haiti, followed by two tours with UNIFIL, first as the Chief Engineer and later as the Chief of Integrated Support Services. In between, he had a 15-month tour with UNLB. Prior to taking up the post of Chief Engineer for peacekeeping at UN headquarters in 2003, he undertook a four-month assignment in MONUC. In 2006 he was assigned as the Chief Integrated



Support Services to the mission in Sudan, during which he supported the logistics effort in establishing the mission in Darfur. He returned to UNHQ in December to act as the Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Field Support until taking up his current appointment.

A qualified Civil Engineer, Mr. von Ruben spent 20 years, after his national military service, in the private sector in his native South Africa and in England.

Mr. von Ruben is married to Adriana and they have two daughters: Sophie (seven) and Amy (five).

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Maj. Johann Zach arrived in Cyprus on 11 March to take over the post of Civil Affairs Military Liaison Officer.

Born in Langschwarza in Lower Austria in 1956, Maj. Zach joined the Austrian Armed Forces in 1975. He has had several postings as NCO in Artillery Battalion 3. He graduated as an artillery officer in 1989. He has been a platoon leader, company commander and an Information Officer in the HQ of the military training area of Allentsteig in Austria.



This is Maj. Zach's third tour with UNFICYP having served in 1981 as a Liaison Post leader in the Karpas area; in 1985 as an Observation Post leader in Dherinia; and in 1994-1995 as a Deputy Commander and then Commander 1st Coy in Athienou, Sector 4. In 1997, he served with the OSCE as a Polling station supervisor by the elections in Bosnia. In 2000 he took up the post of DCO/COO in the Austrian Contingent in UNDOF for one year.

Maj. Zach is married to Renate. His hobbies include photography and travelling.

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Maj. Michael Hunt MBE BSc (Hons) was born on 25 October 1959 in Wisbech near Cambridge. He joined the British Army in 1976 where he trained as a professional chef. He spent his early years in Northern Ireland and Germany where he met his wife Helen, a German linguist.

Having ascended through the ranks of the British Army and in his spare time gaining teaching qualifications, he spent time as an Instructor at the Army School of Catering in Aldershot. There, Michael gained several national and international awards for cooking. Whilst in Germany



during 1997 he was awarded an MBE for work carried out in Poland. After a short period, he was commissioned and posted back to the UK to undertake employment in the specialist field of contracts and procurement.

At 40, Michael attended a two-year course at the University of Surrey in Corporate Hospitality and Catering Business Management. He was then posted to the British MOD for six years.

Michael is accompanied by his wife Helen, daughter Annika and grandson Charlie (11 months).

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Lt. Col. Béla Berena took over the post of Deputy Commander Sector 4 on 12 March 2008.

Lt. Col. Berena comes from Székesfehérvár, western Hungary, and joined the Air Force in 1975. He trained in the Killián György Air Force College of Technology (Szolnok) as a pilot/air controller, and served in various home postings of the Hungarian Defence Forces. He currently holds the post of head of the HDF Standardisation and Doctrinal Department.

This is Lt. Col. Berena's second tour of UNFICYP, as he was appointed DCO Sector 4 between 2000-2001.



Lt. Col. Berena is a member of the international treaty for controlling team of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) and the Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBM); a member of the NATO Land Operational Working Group, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Working Group; and is Head Editor of the Joint Forces Command of the Hungarian Defence Forces.

His hobbies include military and civilian aeronautics, pedagogy and psychology.

He is married to Erzsébet and they have two children, Bettina and Balázs.

Apologies go to Lt. Comd. (Maj.) Alberto Cohen who was referred to as the Air Safety Officer instead of the Force Signals Officer in the last edition of the Blue Beret.

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Lt. Col. Eduardo Carreras was born in Buenos Aires in May 1961. He took over the post of CMTC on 30 March.

He joined the Army in 1979 and served in the 16th, 11th and 26th Mountaineer Infantry Regiments and later in the Army General Staff and the Infantry School. He has participated in many military courses, most importantly the Logistics Specialization and Military Joint Planning.



This is Eduardo's third tour of duty with UNFICYP (the first two were as S4/Sector 1). He also served as a Military Observer with UNIKOM from 1999-2000.

Eduardo is married to Carolina and they have four children: Santiago (20), Eduardo (19), Carolina (17) and Gonzalo (eight). His interests include rugby, football, skiing, snorkelling, playing guitar and piano.

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Lt. Col. Lucilo Bernabe Lopez Mayer joined Sector 1 on 26 March 2008.

Born on 22 November 1964 in Entre Rios, Argentina, he graduated from the Argentinian Army Officers' Academy in 1985 as a Second Lieutenant in Combat Engineering.

In 1995, he took up a one-year post as the Argentinian Military Liaison Officer in UNTAES. Since then, his overseas postings have included Argentinian Engineers DCO in UNIKOM (2001) and Staff Officer at the



KFOR HQ NATO as Theatre Mines & EOD Officer (2005).

Lt. Col. Lopez Meyer attended the War College in Buenos Aires (1999-2000), has a university degree in Strategy and Organisations, and during 2007, he completed his MA in Strategy and Geopolitics.

He is married to Gabriela and they have three sons, Lucilo (14), Facundo Galo (12) and Estanislao (four). His interests include skydiving, scuba diving, sailing, polo and golf.

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Lt. Col. Capps joined the British Army in 1985 and was commissioned into the Royal Corps of Transport (RCT) in December 1986.

His initial tour was with 1 Sqn, which included his first (six-month) tour with UNFICYP. He was then posted to Germany. Additional postings included Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Australia and the UK, including a tour as instructor at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst and also leading land planning and



execution in support of the disaster relief operation following the Tsunami December 2004.

Lt. Col. Capps married Robyn in 2000 and they have two daughters aged four and three.

He was a member of the Great Britain marathon canoe racing team from 1993... 2001 and is part of the crew that holds the Devizes to Westminster Canoe Challenge record. He enjoys outdoor activities and all forms of fitness training.

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Maj. Daniel (Dan) McNeil is a Canadian Officer who is currently serving on a three-year exchange with the British Army in Germany. Maj. McNeil is OC of 62 Material Squadron, within 6 Supply Regiment RLC stationed in Gütersloh, Germany. Maj. McNeil, his wife Audra, daughter Jordan and son Conor all reside in Gütersloh with their dog Molly, and have very much enjoyed the British hospitality and European experience.



Maj. McNeil is a major (pardon the pun) sports fan and enjoys playing and watching ice hockey, football (European and American), basketball and boxing. He also enjoys beer (pretty much all beer), travelling and music. He is a huge supporter of Chelsea Football Club who he predicts will win the treble (Champions League, Premiership and FA Cup) within the next three years.



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mpS□□□□□□□ was a very special day for 1/Lt. Miroslav —elep, Adjutant Sector 4. His wife Slavka delivered their first child. Miroslav had intended to be present at the birth, but Alica had other plans. She was born one month prematurely, weighing 2.46 kg.

Miro flew to Slovakia and met up with his wife and daughter after Alica had spent two weeks in an incubator. The happy father announced, "I am now well aware of the pleasant obligation to change my CV at the end of my tour with UNFICYPŽ"





As UNFICYP prepared to mark International Day of UN Peacekeeping in May, it received some very special visitors: former peacekeepers who had returned to Cyprus to reminisce about a unique experience in their lives and to get up to speed on the fast-moving political situation on the island. The former soldiers from Austria and Denmark proudly donned their blue berets as they toured UNFICYP HQ and the old Nicosia Airport. Their visits served to underline the significant role UNFICYP has played in Cyprus for almost half a century, as well as the remarkable history of UN peacekeeping, which this year marks its sixtieth anniversary.

Other visitors to UNFICYP included the Austrian Defence Attaché Col. Nikolaus Egger on 11 April, the deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr. Vladimir Titov on 18 April, the Hungarian Cypriot community on 21 May (European Day), the Military Police Advisers Community on 22 May, and US Congressional staffers on 26 May.



Never has a football match been played at the UN football pitch with such passion and colours as the one between the ARGCON and UNPA teams on 28 May.

The match, played to the delightful rhythms of beating drums by the visiting ARGCON supporters who travelled in several coaches from Sector 1, San Martin Camp with passion and determination to perform and support, was a fine spectacle of talent and flair.

Kick-off was at 5.30 p.m. and for the first 10 minutes or so, the game started rather shakily with some nervous play from both sides. ARGCON found their feet first and were able to manoeuvre around the pitch with their slick and fast passing, putting the UNFICYP team under pressure at times.

UNFICYP then began to play on a few uncovered weaknesses from ARGCON, and was able to break the deadlock with a goal after mounted pressure from a quick taken corner.

Constant pressure and tactical play from both sides continued with increasing attacking formations from



The UNFICYP team ran their hearts out at the recent Cyprus Services Orienteering Championships held over two days at Melanda on 10-11 April 2008.

The Individual Events were held on day one and UNFICYP managed to secure not only 1st and 2nd place on the 7km A Course but 1st, 2nd and 3rd places on the 5km B Course.

MSgt. Tamas Tomoskozy, a top Hungarian orienteer with the Mobile Force Reserve and Capt. Richard Murray, the Brazilian Ops Officer with Sector 1 were the heroes in the Men's Class. Diana Bridger from HQ UNPOL won the shorter B Course, with guest runners Mrs. Kirsi Mantovani from Finland second and Mr. Lennart Gustavsson from Sweden third.

The Harris Relay Events were held on day two and the UNFICYP mixed team of Maj. Kathryn Heppinstall from HQ Ops Info, Mr. Kyriakos Michaelides from IT Section, Mrs. Kirsi Mantovani and Ms. Diana Bridger managed to win the runners-up trophy.



A friendly game of football was played between Slovakian peacekeepers and Czechs living in Cyprus on 28 April 2008 as part of efforts to retain good relations between the two nations and their Cypriot partners.

The game, organised by the Slovak Embassy, was played in Limassol and was won 4-1 by the Slovaks. Ambassador H.E. Anna Tureniová presented the Victory Cup to the captain of the Slovak team, Maj. Kamil Bilek, Force Engineer, UNFICYP.

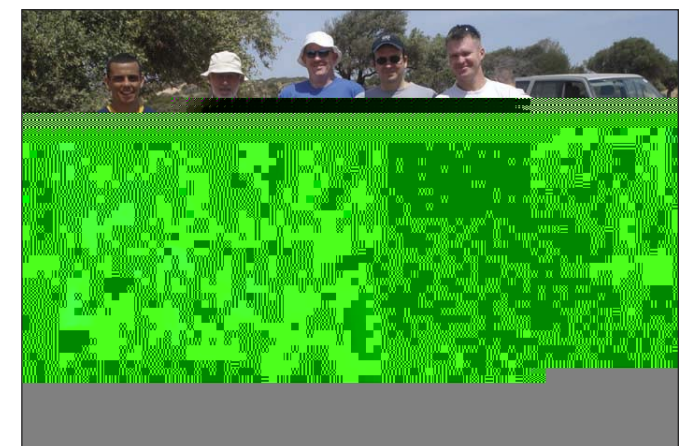
ARGCON, who were eventually rewarded with a great through ball, cutting the UNFICYP defence like a hot knife through butter, finishing off with a fantastic low strike to the bottom left corner, leaving the hosts rather stunned as the first half ended 1-1 with not much separating the two.

The second half was a continuation of the same strategy and

determination from both sides. The final goal came from the UNFICYP team with a finely executed penalty shot into the bottom far left corner as the goalkeeper dived desperately, but to no avail.

Despite ARGCON making fast tactical changes to boost the strike force for the equalizer, the final score was 2-1 to UNFICYP.

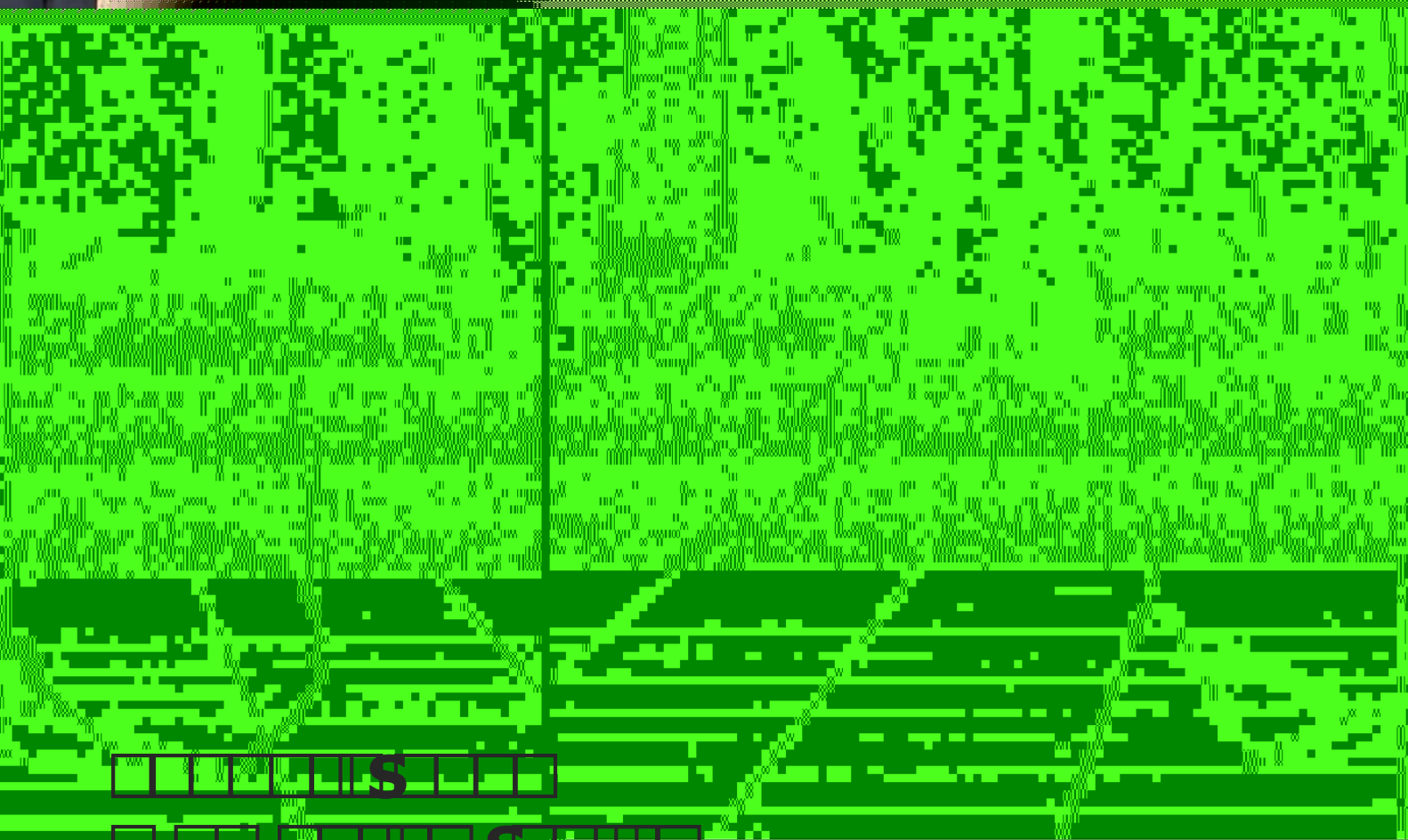
**Rick Demetriou**



**Back Row: Capt. Richard Murray, Mr. Lennart Gustavsson, Maj. Nigel Stanton, Mr. Kyriakos Michaelides, MSgt. Tamas Tomoskozy. Front Row: Ms. Diana Bridges, Mrs. Kirsi Mantovani and Maj. Kathryn Heppinstall**







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