

GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



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Dear Reader!

I proudly present the new edition of the Golan Journal. With all its efforts the editorial team again can provide you - the worshiped reader - with a magazine full of insights into the mission of UNDOF. For these efforts I would like to thank the entire contingent Press Officers for their contribution.



Our team: Alexander, Günther, Taka and Gerry

Sadly, we must say good bye to our outgoing comrade Lt I Daisuke Nakashima and our Canadian proofreader Maj Greg Penner. At the same time I would like to warmly welcome their successors Lt I Hidekatsu Eiraku and LCdr Scott Guild in our editorial team. But also my assignment as Staff Officer Public Relations draws to an end and I want to thank all our loyal readers for staying with us and for all the positive feedback we got from you!

In this edition it gives me great pleasure to present articles about the newly restructured Operations Cell of the Austrian Battalion, the final Polish Medal Parade on the Golan Heights of the outgoing Polish Battalion, and Indian traditions maintained far away from their homeland

Dip in and find out!

Thank you very much and good bye!

Yours sincerely,
Capt Günther Kreiml, SOPR

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Front (Page 1): CITS Network Engineer Mr. Ben Hodzic monitoring satellite transmissions from UNDOF HQ
Photo by WO II Gernot Payer, Force Photographer

Back (Page 24): Wadi Raqqah
Photo by WO II Gernot Payer, Force Photographer

Editorial Staff:

*Editor in Chief,
Proofreader & SOPR*
Capt Günther Kreiml

Editor & SSO M/PR
Maj Alex Unterweger

Editor & DMPIO
Capt Takahisa Moriya

Proofreader & SSO Pers
LCdr Scott Guild

*Editor, Layout Designer
& Force Photographer*
WO II Gernot Payer

Editorial Office:

UNDOF HQ
Camp FAOUAR
E-Mail: undof-photo@un.org

Online edition:

<http://www.un.org/depts/dpko/missions/undof/journal.html>

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Unit Press Officers:

AUSBATT - **Capt Rüdiger Von Gimborn**

HRVCON - **Lt I Jelena Srakic**

INDCON - **LtCol Kartik Kumar Singh**

J-CON - **Lt I Hidekatsu Eiraku**

POLBATT - **Capt Agnieszka Strzemiecka**

OGG - **Capt Kellie Robinson**

MP - **Maj Rajendra**



Force Commander's Message

Dear Fellow Peacekeepers!

As the summer draws to a close, I wish to express my thanks to all members of the contingent for continuing to work to the high standards that I have come to expect from you.

The number of violations reported has decreased over previous years and months, and this is in no small part due to your active and constant presence in the Areas of Separation and Limitation. The thousands of kilometers of patrolling, the clearance of hundreds of kilometers of new patrol paths, the countless inspections, and the constant presence of UNDOF and OGG personnel have all contributed to the successes of the past months. You have fully grasped the policy of prevention that I believe is key in maintaining stability in the region, and have all contributed to the continued success of our mission.



As the weather begins to change with the seasons, I remind you to remain vigilant and exercise caution at all times. Driving conditions will deteriorate, and with wet roads will come an increased possibility of accidents. Adjust your driving to the weather and road conditions. No task is worth the loss or injury of any member of this mission in a road accident.

The change of weather also leads me to think of another major change in the near future. By now, the first members of the newly arrived PHILBATT will have joined UNDOF. I know that they will be well prepared and looked after by POLBATT, but I ask you to do all in your power to ensure the transition is a smooth one. The impending departure of POLBATT, after 35 years of Polish contribution to UNDOF, will be a sad one. It goes without saying that Poland's contribution to the mission has been an integral part of UNDOF's history, and preparations are well underway to ensure that their departure is a fitting one, representative of their long and distinguished service in the pursuit of peace in the region.

For those newly arrived to the mission, welcome. I challenge you to not only master your duties and responsibilities, but to learn about the cultures and people of the Middle East. You have joined an extremely successful mission in an extremely interesting part of the world and I wish you a safe and rewarding deployment.

In the Service of Peace, to EVERYONE in UNDOF, I say ...

*Thank you, Hvala, Danke, Merci, Dziękuję,
Salamat, Arigato, Dhanyavada, Shukran, Toe Dah!*

Major General Wolfgang JILKE
Force Commander UNDOF

Chief of Staff Words

This is perhaps the last occasion that I will be penning my thoughts through the Golan Journal. For having completed my tour of a year; I shall be heading home in mid November. Therefore I will take this opportunity to make some broad observations on the Force based on my experience of the past one year.

My first observation is with regard to the overall environment in which the Force is endeavoring to fulfill its Mandate. In my view, the general level of trust and transparency in conduct of business between the Force and both host nations is much better today than a year back. It may be the outcome of a strategic choice made by all involved parties or a coincidence of simultaneous presence of amenable leadership on all sides. But it would not be possible unless both the parties felt the requisite confidence in UNDOF's capabilities and willingness to be a sensitive, fair, and transparent and impartial presence in the region. This in itself should be immensely satisfying to all of us.

My other comment is with regards to the operational effectiveness of the Force. For a "Traditional" Mission that has generally seen a stable environment since its inception, it would be easy to become stale, bulky and lethargic. However, it's a tribute to the Force's leadership over the decades that despite the apparently stable conditions, they have constantly evolved their concepts of operations and basic tactics, catering for even minor changes in the ground realities. Mobile reserves at each level, enhanced emphasis on mobile and night operations, redeployment of

forces to cover weak spots/hotspots, proactive approach aimed at prevention of violations rather than only reacting to them, a renewed civil affairs focus and effort at integration and synergizing logistic effort are some steps that I have been witness to over the past year. And my own perception is that it is this urge to evolve with time that is so much the DNA of the Force that is the single most important contributing factor in the Force's continued success.

However, lest I give an impression that the Force is at the very optimal level of operational and administrative effectiveness and can therefore rest on its laurels, let me also make some observations that are to the contrary. I am of the view that our Line Battalions are continuing with their legacy organizational structures and despite some baby steps for change, are administratively and logistically too heavy. I also feel that for a small Mission working in a traditional environment, we can be much more integrated and the considerable duplication of logistics and administrative effort that exists between the Line Battalions and the Logistics Battalion and that between the Military and the Mission Support structures can be minimized. The good news though is that efforts are already on in this regard.

Talking of integration though, I have often wondered as to why the UN Civilian presence in Peacekeeping Missions is termed "Mission Support". It gives the impression that the Mission is only for the



Military and the UN Civilian structure is outside it. In my view the UN Civilian Structure is integral to the Mission and a better term needs to be coined to reflect this.

And finally, before I sign off for this last time, let me take this opportunity to convey my sincere thank to all of you for your unflinching support that facilitated my functioning. It was a wonderful experience that I shall cherish forever. May God bless you and your families.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G S Bisht". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Colonel Ganesh Singh Bisht
Chief of Staff UNDOF

Visits to UNDOF by Capt Takahisa Moriya, DMPIO



H.E. Mr. Li Huaxin, Chinese Ambassador to Syria, visited Camp Faouar and UNDOF Positions (3rd Jul 2009)



LtGen Chikadibia Isaac Obiakor, United Nations Military Adviser for Peacekeeping Operations, visited Camp Faouar and UNDOF Positions (24th - 26th Jul 2009)



Mr. Ivan Lewis, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the United Kingdom, visited Camp Faouar and Quneitra (4th Aug 2009)



H.E. Mr. Yutaka Iimura, Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for the Middle East, visited Camp Ziouani and OP 51 (7th Aug 2009)



MGen Dieter Heidecker, Deputy Commander of the Joint Austrian Armed Forces, and an Austrian parliamentary delegation visited Camp Faouar and UNDOF Positions (29th Sep - 2nd Oct 2009)

- MGen Zbigniew Tlok-Kosowski, Chief of the Support Inspectorate of the Polish Armed Forces, visited Camp Ziouani (5th - 12th Aug 2009)
- H.E. Ms. Petronila P. Garcia, Philippine Ambassador to Israel, visited Camp Ziouani (8th Aug 2009)
- Mr. Yasushi Noguchi, Director for International Peace Cooperation, Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, visited A- and B-Side of UNDOF (12th - 14th Aug 2009)
- 16 students of the University of California, the United States of America, visited Camp Ziouani (17th Aug 2009)
- MGen Dieter Heidecker, Deputy Commander of the Joint Austrian Armed Forces, visited Camp Faouar and UNDOF Positions (1st - 5th Sep)
- Mr. Scott Lasensky, Vice President and Senior Research Associate in the Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention, the United States of America, visited Camp Faouar (25th Sep 2009)

New People in UNDOF



The new CMS

Mr. Milan Trojanović was born in Cairo, Egypt in 1961. He graduated from American University of Beirut in 1984. In February 1987, he joined UNRWA and was appointed as an Associate Administrative Officer. From August 1988 to September 1989, he served as Refugee Affairs Officer in Gaza and West Bank. In the meantime, he successfully passed the UN National Competitive Examination and was, thereafter in September 1989, appointed as an Associate Finance Officer in FOD New York. During his service in UNIFIL from 1992 to 1996, Mr. Trojanović served as Chief Contracts Officer, Head of UNIFIL Office in Beirut and Chief Procurement Officer. During that period, he also served in UNAVEM III for 3-months TDY as Chief Procurement Officer. After three years in UN HQ as Finance Officer, he served in UNIFIL as Chief General Services and Budget Officer. In 2000, Mr. Trojanović was appointed Special Assistant to the Chief LSD, DPKO. He became Chief Central Support Services in ESCWA in 2003, where he has also acted as Officer-in-Charge of Human Resources Section for four months. After three months TDY to UNIFIL as Acting Chief Administrative Services, Mr. Trojanović was appointed Chief of Mission Support in UNAMI. Effective 1st September 2009, Mr. Trojanović took over the duties of CMS in UNDOF.

Mr. Trojanović is married to Joyce Ayoub and they have three children, Radmilo (20), Ilija (19) and Natalija (16). He is an avid soccer fan and was an active basketball player in his university days and still tries to practice basketball, soccer and swimming in his free time.



The new CISS

Mrs. Susie Busch accepted a position with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, now the Department of Field Support, in 2006 following a six month appointment with the UN Joint Logistic Centre in post-earthquake Pakistan. Prior to the move to the UN, she served with the Australian Army for a number of years – she completed her service as Commanding Officer of the Army Logistics School. Mrs. Busch has a broad civilian and military background which includes service in Health, Logistics, Operations, Intelligence and Training. She has deployed as a Peacekeeper to Rwanda and East Timor and has been involved in numerous support operations to Iraq, Afghanistan and the south east Pacific, including the Tsunami of 2005.

Mrs. Busch held a fellowship position at the United States Defense Intelligence Agency in 1999-2000 during which time she developed and published operational support policies for deployed forces in Kosovo. She is a graduate of Command and Staff College and holds a Masters in Management and Post Graduate qualifications in Humanitarian Assistance, Logistics Management and Women's Health.

She likes to run, drink good wine and travel.



The new CO/J-CON

Maj Naonobu Koyama was born on 3rd Oct 1973, in Hokkaido, Japan. He graduated from Okayama University in 1996, with a Bachelor Degree in Literature. He then joined Officer Candidate Course and was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant in 1997.

Maj Koyama's military career posts include Firing Platoon Leader, Air Defense Operation Officer in the 5th Air Defense Battalion (1997-2003) and Tactics Instructor at Air Defense School (2003-2005). He joined the Captain Career Course in the United States Army Air Defense School in 2005. Between the years 2005-2007, Maj Koyama attended the Command and General Staff Course and was then assigned as Commander of 304th Air Defense Battery. Prior to his present command post as CO of the 28th J-CON, he was assigned as G-3 staff of the 11th Brigade.

Maj Koyama is married to his wife Yoko. In his spare time he enjoys driving and playing musical instruments.

OGG going mobile

In July 2009 the Observer Group Golan commences a new phase of its service in the Golan with the implementation of a new capability, the Mobile Team (MOBT). The capability has been developed in order to establish direct liaison with civilians working and living within the Area of Separation. The MOBT will play a major role in educating locals on the UN Mandate in the Golan in the hope of reducing the number of violations resulting from farmers and shepherds crossing the A-line. Already in 2009 there has been a significant decrease in the number of farmers and shepherds crossing the A-line; however, continued liaison as well as UNDOF's

heavy patrolling presence may result in a further decrease.

At this point the exact starting date of the MOBT is to be confirmed as the provision of an interpreter and SSAD approval are still to be finalised.

The MOBT, which will consist of four UNTSO UNMOs, will operate from OGG HQ on the B-Side only. The implementation of the MOBT will be in phases with the newly appointed MOBT Leader, Maj Ramiz Selmani, commencing his duties once the concept of operations has been endorsed. Maj Selmani has spent a significant time in UNTSO, being 2004/2006/2009 and has strong cultural awareness

and a thorough understanding of the mission.

The success of the MOBT will be monitored closely, and it may take some time for procedures to be fully established. It is also hoped, that similar advances may be made on the A-Side in order to interact more closely with the civilian population and provide greater public awareness in the UN's role towards establishing peace in the Golan Heights.

However, in the interim you can expect to see the team regularly patrolling through the AOL/AOS.

*Article by Capt Kellie Robinson, MIO
Photo by WOII Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer*



Team leader Maj Ramiz Selmani



The Communications and Information Technology Section

The Communications and Information Technology Section, well known by its acronym CITS, is an integrated and dynamic Section that is comprised of twelve international, eleven national and eleven military personnel.

CITS is responsible for providing information and communications technology (ICT) services and support to all UNDOF civilian and military colleagues in all locations. ICT is a key strategic enabler for UNDOF and facilitates the utilization of new technologies for strategic advantage as well as allowing technical innovation to provide value to our complex and dynamic operations. CITS provides a complete computer based office work environment including access to enterprise information systems and telecommunication services including military and civilian pattern radio networks, telephony and facsimile capabilities. CITS personnel design, install and maintain complex voice and data networks using only in-house capabilities. They manage an inventory of around \$7 Million and have an annual budget of around \$2.5 Million. The ICT



The CITS team outside their building in Camp Faouar

equipment inventory alone comprises around 3,000 non-expendable assets which must be tracked and physically inspected on a regular basis.

There are many complex day-to-day challenges in maintaining a wide area network (WAN) that supports mission components that are geographically dispersed but CITS staff are able to ensure that services are provided with minimal interruption and few outages. Regular physical and technical inspections of all equipment at all UNDOF positions is undertaken and prompt on-site technical repairs or remote trouble shooting is done quickly upon receipt of an electronic ISS request. Two years ago an ambitious technical modernization program was initiated by Mr. Roy Joblin, the CITS Section Chief. This

project was aimed at reducing and eliminating redundant and technically obsolete applications, systems and equipment. CITS had to standardize equipment platforms and upgrade external connectivity to the public telephone network, the internet and DPKO WAN.

New microwave links with bigger network capacity and increased data throughput have been installed. In addition, CITS installed an IP-based telephone network and cre-



Maj. H S Pelia (ITO-CF) configures an application server



Artin Najarian analyses data traffic patterns in the Network Control Centre



Adnan Jawish & Sami Karabitian test and repair Motorola radios



Mohamed Jarkou performs his best work at heights



Ben Hodzic & Wael Ismail prepare another videoconference



Nabih Saed & Souheil Karabitian perform inventory inspections



The CITS team in Camp Ziouani



The author Irene Zulu-Chabala & Wael Ismail enjoy a laugh

ated a network of desktop videoconferencing devices able to connect UNDOF to important UN offices and other DPKO missions in the region as well as to UNHQ-NY.

The Section upgraded the level and availability of internet services by implementing redundancy, fail-over and back-up mecha-

nisms which have greatly improved UNDOF's Internet, Lotus notes email, print services and shared network resources. Internet connectivity was upgraded from ADSL technology to broadband via commercial fiber-optic connection.

There still remains much to be done as UNDOF CITS lead the

way in regionalism by working closely with colleagues in UNIFIL, UNFICYP & UNTSO in efforts to remove duplication of effort and disparity of service across missions.

*Article by Irene Zulu-Chabala, Asset Unit Manager
Photos by WO II Gernot Payer, Force Photographer*



Sami Karabitian performs satellite antenna maintenance



UNDOF CITS also support UNTSO-OGG with telephone and computer systems

The new Ops-Branch – mobile deployment

Acting, not just reacting is the new policy after newly assessing and adopting the concept of operations of the Austrian Battalion to the UNDOF mission's demands in 2009.

Whoever refers to this mission as just „looking and cooking“, and trust me, I did hear this often before I came here, is totally mistaken. We are today facing a modern and flexible deployment of our troops in the UNDOF Area of Separation. By the end of 2008, the concept of operations was rethought. Up to then our mission was more static and violations of the agreement were simply observed and reported but with the turn of year also pages were turned and we converted to a more flexible, mobile, and most important of all, preventive concept. Consequently, patrols were massively enforced, negotiations were conducted and we also liaised with the local “Muktars” (equivalent of mayor) so as to recognize violations of the agreement before taking place and primarily to prevent them. This approach demands permanent contact with the local population, awareness of their ways of living and of their culture. You always have to be up to date and wherever possible one step ahead.

This task is mostly carried out by our companies deployed in the Area of Separation and it is lead and controlled by the Ops-Branch.

Structures and tasks

The Ops-Branch consists of ten peacekeepers of the Ops-Cell, the OpsInfo-Cell, and the Duty office. Furthermore, the Ops-Branch includes the Signals Officer and the Explosive Ordnance Disposal team (EOD), which is in charge of checking, disposing and blasting of mines on and around our patrol tracks. The Chief Operations Officer (COO) is responsible for all operational matters. He plans, coordinates and surveys training and execution and takes over lead of all elements involved on the spot if

necessary. He pulls all the operational strings, coordinates staff work and is the closest advisor to the Commanding Officer (CO). For this job you need a full scaled understanding of operations and tactics, vision and you must also understand and be aware of the needs of your soldiers doing their job in the line companies.

The OpsInfo Officer's primary task is to deputize COO in case of absence so he is supposed to know what is going on concerning operations. Apart from this he is in charge of situational updates regarding politics in the region and advises the CO in security matters. He also acts as the Press Officer of the bat-



The Duty Officer on the radio

talion and is in charge of producing the battalion's magazine “AUSBATT-Splitter”. He is supported by the photographer, who does all the documentation and layouts and furthermore assists in investigations and interrogations.

The Duty Office is an equally important part of the Ops-Branch. It is the place where all the operational information comes in from the line companies. The Duty Officer keeps the operational maps updated and has to make the first decisions in case anything happens out in the Area of Separation. This demands a witty mind and exact knowledge of



Incoming and outgoing COO discussing operational matters



The Signals Officer establishing a link to Austria



The OpsInfoO and the photographer at work

the area as he is the one to direct elements to the spot and calls in the Rapid Reaction Group (RRG) if needed to reinforce our troops on the spot.

Being in the EOD team needs experience and subtle knowledge of all explosive devices. Otherwise checking patrol tracks, disposal and

blasting of mines might lead to a fatal end. Danger of mines is still high in the operating area and every year in springtime all the tracks have to be checked and marked again. The EOD team is also in charge of clearing the area if someone accidentally gets into a minefield to get him out before something

worse happens.

The Signals Officer takes care that all means of communications are working as they should and that everybody has the ability to do proper reporting. Without his highly appreciated work the whole Ops-Branch would be numb and deaf and thus not operational.



The COO supervising an exercise in the mountain area



Patrolling the Area of Separation

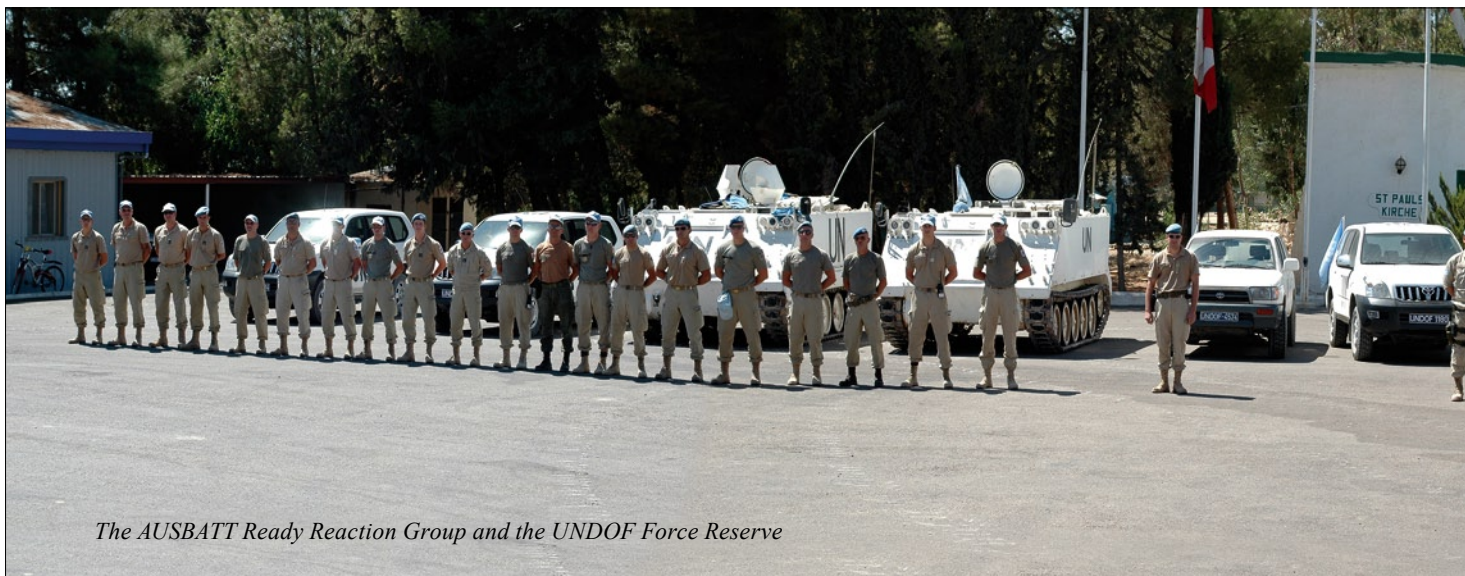
Shepherds, farmers and other civilians

Formerly violations of the A-Line by shepherds or farmers happened quite often, still figures could be

significantly reduced by our patrols and by negotiations. Of course they still happen because it is the shepherd's and farmer's land and they have been cultivating it long before the war.

In case of a violation the line companies report to the Duty Office and a Liaison Officer is sent to explain the situation to the respective persons.

If there is someone who still



The AUSBATT Ready Reaction Group and the UNDOF Force Reserve



Checking a patrol track

won't listen and obey the agreement it is the Ops-Branch who carries out liaison with the „Muktars“ and underlines the Coy's efforts by making contact with the local police forces.

The same goes for the cultivated fields reaching over the A-Line.

You need patience and a good understanding of the people here to get all this done without escalation.

Mine disposal and checking of patrol tracks

The EOD team ensures permanent mine safety of our patrol tracks and thus guarantees our freedom of movement. In case of the mine situations and of the weather conditions this is not an easy job especially in those areas where rather new types of mines were used. They have very

little metal inside and are very hard to find with the devices you use for mine clearing, modern as they may be. Another point is that there are no existing mine maps and it is always quite a thrill what they will find in case of checking new patrol tracks or putting up new barrels along the A-Line.

I hope that this article conveys how broad the scale of action can be here in UNDOF and that the times of „looking and cooking“ are long gone and I'm quite sure that anybody who has been into this will agree. Whoever decides to join this mission, especially the Ops-Branch, can look forward of having an interesting and demanding time. As for me I don't want to miss one day.

*Article by
Capt Rüdiger Von Gimborn,
OpsInfoO/AB
Photos by
MSgt Martin Austerhuber,
OpsInfoAsst/AB*



Medal Parade of the Polish Military Contingent in UNDOF

Polish peacekeepers serving on both the A-Side and B-Side on the Golan Heights celebrated their last Medal Parade in UNDOF attended by representatives of UNDOF Headquarters on 14th of July.



FC inspecting the troops

During their last gala soldiers and employed specialists of the army were awarded with the UN Medal without neglecting the operation and mandatory tasks in POLBATT's area of responsibility. All who gathered for the gala were welcomed by the Contingent Commander of the 31st Polish



A high ranking guest on the Golan

Military Contingent in UNDOF, LtCol Mariusz Jurek. In his speech he thanked his peacekeepers for all the work and efforts they put forth in completing tasks and for the

soldiers who were proud of the Force Commander's recognition of their excellent performance and achievements while serving in UNDOF. He also emphasized that their flexibility and change of philosophy in performing tasks from "reaction" to "prevention" led to constant reductions of violations of the agreement on disengagement. He also expressed appreciation for combining the skillful completion of their mandatory tasks with maintaining good relations and bringing help to local people. This had a great impact on the good reputation of UN peacekeeping in the region.

It was an honor for the CO POLBATT to also welcome at the gala the Operations Commander of the Polish Armed Forces, BGen Witold Poluchowicz, representatives of the

excellent soldierly attitude in serving under the blue flag. Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke honored the gala in Camp Ziouani with his presence and in his address he directed many warm and cordial words to the Polish

Israeli Defense Forces, members of the Polish embassy in Tel Aviv and of the Polish Society PIAST.

The UNDOF medals were presented to the Polish peacekeepers by the UNDOF Force Commander and BGen Poluchowicz, who was pleased to congratulate the Polish soldiers he remembered from the years of serving in units of the 16th Mechanized Division in Poland.

At the final part of the gala Polish cuisine, prepared by our cooks, was served to all the participants of the Medal Parade in the traditional manner. As always, the most popular dishes were the so called "bigos" and polish sausage. Using this occasion for friendly conversations with members of other contingents, we



Polish peacekeepers parade after the ceremony

heard many words of thanks and also regrets, that at the end of the year the Polish peacekeepers will be no longer present on the Golan Heights.

*Article and Photos by
Capt Agnieszka Strzemeicka,
PressO/POLBATT*



MGen Gilke presenting the UNDOF Medal to his Polish peacekeepers

Presenting the UNDOF 35 Years Photo Book



CO POLBATT hands over the treasured UNDOF Photo Book as a special present

Indian Independence Day

The 62nd Independence Day of India was celebrated in Camp Ziouani by the Indian contingent on 15th Aug 2009. It was on this day in 1947 that India got its independence from British Rule.



Indian peacekeepers present arms

The festive mood among the peacekeepers of the Indian contingent could be gauged by looking at any of their faces while gathering for the celebration at Parade Square of Camp Ziouani. The event started with unfurling of Indian National Flag by COS and Indian National Senior, Col Ganesh Singh Bisht. The National flag was given salute by the parade commander, Maj Sanjeev Singh, Vir Chakra (third highest gallantry award in Indian army) and all attendees backed by the Indian National Anthem.

In the following speech Col Bisht pointed out the importance of

the Independence Day celebrations and how much it means to Indians and he also highlighted the progress made by India since independence.

Thereafter Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke addressed the gathering and enumerated the good work being done by INDCON members before he unveiled the newly erected “Minaret of the Brave”. This minaret of brave has been conceptualized and constructed by the 7th rotation of the Indian contingent. “When arriving here at the Golan Heights in mid June this year, we felt that though so many of our soldiers of different

nationalities have lost their lives in the service of peace and humanity, this camp did not have a central memorial for them”, CO LOGBATT LtCol Amit Ashri stated. “With benedictions from the Force Commander, now we have one, and it stands in front of the LOGBATT Officers’ Mess at the main gate of Camp Ziouani”, he continued.

Up to the present a total of 53 brave peacekeepers have lost their lives in the mission area due to various incidents including hostile firing, mine accidents and shooting down of a resupply flight. 22 of these were from Austria, 13 from Canada,



The COS, Col G.S. Bisht, addresses the parade



FC congratulates on Independence Day



FC honors fallen comrades



"Minaret of the Brave"

nine from Poland, seven from Finland and two from Ireland.

After this the Indian contingent presented a cultural program for all the guests in the Khetarpal Auditorium. All the guests enjoyed the presentation of "Lazium", an eye-catching folk dance created by the famous Maratha warrior Shivaji as well as audio-visual presentations of Indian culture in all its diversity. Finally the guests were invited to the international kitchen, and were served with a sumptuous meal of wide variety after the Force Commander cut the cake of commemoration of the 62nd Independence Day of India.

*Article by LtCol Kartik Kumar Singh,
SMO INDCON
Photos by LOGBATT*

Ganpati Puja in Camp Ziouani

Peacekeepers of INDCON celebrated Ganpati Puja starting on 23rd Sep 2009 with lots of pomp and gaiety and concluded on 27th Sep 2009 with Visarjan mixing the five basic elements of the body with the five elements of the universe in Jordan River.



Ganpati is one of the Indian Gods who is very famous in the western-central part of India, the Maharashtra region. Since many of the Indian troops in INDCON are from that region, Ganpati Puja was celebrated for four continuous days by INDCON. Ganpati, also known as Ganesha, is blessed with a human body and an elephant's head.

According to the legend, Lord Shiva, the Hindu God of resolution, was away at a war. His wife Parvati, wanted to bathe. Having no one to guard the door to her house, she conceived of the idea of creating

a son who could guard her. Parvati created Ganesha out of the sandalwood paste that she used for her bath and breathed life into the figure. She then set him to stand guard at her door and instructed him not to let anyone enter. In the meantime, Lord Shiva returned from the battle, but as Ganesha did not know him Ganesha stopped Shiva from entering Parvati's chamber. Shiva, enraged by Ganesh's impudence, drew his trident and cut off Ganesha's head. Parvati emerged to find Ganesha decapitated and flew into a rage. She took on the form of

the Goddess Kali and threatened destruction of the three worlds, heaven, earth and the subterranean.

Parvati was in a dangerous mood and, seeing her in this mood, the other gods were afraid. Shiva, in an attempt to pacify Parvati, sent his hordes to find a child whose mother is facing away from the child in negligence, to cut off the child's head and return quickly with it. The first living thing they came across was an elephant facing north, the auspicious direction associated with wisdom, so they returned with the head of the elephant. Shiva placed it on



Devotees being blessed with sacred fire at Ganesha's temple

the headless body of Parvati's son and breathed life into him. Parvati was overjoyed and embraced her son, the elephant-headed boy whom Shiva named Ganesha, the lord of his hordes. Parvati was still upset, however, so Lord Shiva announced that everyone who worships Ganesha before any other form of God is favored.

Thus Ganesha has an elephant's head which actually means that he has great intellect and wisdom. In Indian culture he is the first God to be worshipped in any of the ceremonies performed by Hindus in India e.g. Marriage. He is supposed to be the "Remover of all Obstacles" in any good project undertaken by man. On these five days, many of the Indian peacekeepers were observed fasting to appease Ganpati.

*Article and photos by
LtCol Kartik Kumar Singh,
SMO INDCON*



Indians warship Ganesha



Visarjan concludes the ritual in the Jordan River

Medal Parade and J-CON Day

The 27th Japanese Contingent held a Medal Parade and the J-CON Day in Camp Faouar on 24th July 2009. This day is about sharing culture and traditions with each other.

We were proud to host the Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke, H.E. Mr. Kunieda, Ambassador of Japan to Syria, the Military Attache Col Suehiro and many guests.

The medal parade of J-CON is accompanied with bugle blowing, in accordance with Japanese custom. 46 peacekeepers under the command of CO J-CON Maj Takagi, including

Japanese rotation hosts proudly. We believe that such events lead to a better understanding and solidarity among all UNDOF members.

In the reception, we offered Japanese food including sushi, which was prepared by the J-CON cooks. The cooks were honored to prepare a beautiful Japanese food culture display for the enjoyment of our guests.

traditional Japanese Calligraphy, and photos of themselves in a traditional Kimono.

We thank all those who attended and participated.

Article by Lt I Daisuke Nakashima,
Adjt/PressO
Photos by WO III Kaoru Omura,
Signal Sgt



Receiving the medal by the FC

three UNDOF HQ personnel, were presented with the UNDOF Medal by Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke, for their 90 days of service within the UNDOF mission. Thus, each member truly became a member of UNDOF.

We held J-CON Day sequentially at the welfare area of Camp Faouar with the goal to introduce aspects of Japanese culture to UNDOF members coming from all over the world. This is a biannual event that each

We exhibited Iaido, Bayonet fighting, Karate, Aikido, and the traditional Japanese tea ceremony followed by a traditional drum performance. The audience was excited by the drums, awed by the force of the Japanese martial arts, and charmed by the beauty of the quietness and harmony of the tea ceremony.

In addition many guests took this opportunity for collecting souvenirs like their names written in



Throwing in Karate



Writing in Japanese Calligraphy



Enjoying Japanese food

Change of Command

Once more six months have passed quickly and J-CON held their Change of Command (CoC) ceremony in Camp Ziouani on 2nd Sept 2009.



Handshaking after the signing ceremony

It was a very clear day, pleasant and comfortable for our honored guests. Force Commander, MGen Wolfgang Jilke, H.E.Mr.Takeuchi, Ambassador of Japan to Israel, commanding officers, branch heads and representatives from our host nation arrived to take part in this important event.

Members of the 27th J-CON rotation lined up with pride and a sense of fulfillment, and the 28th J-CON members felt a real excitement, upon becoming members of the UNDOF family, as we all marched in with pride and dignity. The incoming 28th CO J-CON, Maj Koyama, addressed guests in English and Japanese, emphasizing the importance of the United Nations peacekeeping oper-

ation on the Golan Heights. He promised to contribute further to the UNDOF mission, cooperating with fellow forces, in the same manner as the outgoing contingent had done. We shall overcome lan-

guage, culture and custom differences with a policy of "One for All, All for One"! Closing the CoC, we held a reception for all participants to enjoy Japanese food in a peaceful and friendly atmosphere, using the opportunity either to say good bye or to meet peacekeepers from other nations, who will be our comrades for the next six months.

J-CON consists of a small unit that is only 43 members strong. However, since 1996, when J-CON first arrived to this mission, we have had the honor of receiving the high recognition of the Force Commander, Headquarters and fellow foreign forces. At present, we will do our best in the UNDOF mission, trying to succeed the Japanese tradition of: "Small BUT STRONG".

*Article by LtI Hidekatsu Eiraku,
Adjt/PressO*

*Photos by WO III Koki Higashi,
Signal Sgt*



Handing over ceremony in Camp Ziouani



Celebration of the Victory Day at Posn 10

Far away from our homeland on Mission serving for UNDOF, the Croatian Contingent still fosters traditions like celebrating the Victory Day and Thanksgiving Day.



Salute to Chief of Staff

Celebrated on 5th of August, this day is a republic holiday in Croatia which is held as a memorial to its war of independence. On that date in 1995 the Croatian army took the city Knin during Operation Storm. Since last year, this day is also the day of Croatian veterans. In the 3rd rotation of HRVCON, 87% are Croatian veterans, so we took that day to celebrate with all UNDOF members at Posn 10 in 3rd Coy of AUSBATT.

The celebration started with the arrival and salute to the Chief of Staff Col Ganesh Singh Bisht. After the national anthem faded away we held a minute of silence for our fallen comrades. This moment of commemoration was followed by the addresses of the CO HRVCON, LtCol Antun Šaf, the honorary Consul of Republic Croatia Mr. Khouchaba Nissan, the CO

AUSBATT LtCol Armin Lehner and the COS Col G.S. Bisht closed with his oration to all attendees.

Following the agenda of the program the distinguished guests were

presented a fascinating discourse about Croatia and about the Guard Armored Mechanized Brigade which we come from, done by Lt I Jelena Srakić.

The formal part of the celebration was closed by presentations of Croatian military equipment and self-defense training followed by the banquet with famous Croatian specialties on the menu.

The 3rd rotation of HRVCON thanks all the guests for celebrating this meaningful holiday together at Posn 10.

*Article by Lt I Jelena Srakić,
DOIC 3rd Coy/AB*

*Photos by WO II Drago Magdić,
NBC NCO
and Capt Rüdiger Von Gimborn,
OpsInfoO/AB*



Croatian snacks were served for refreshment

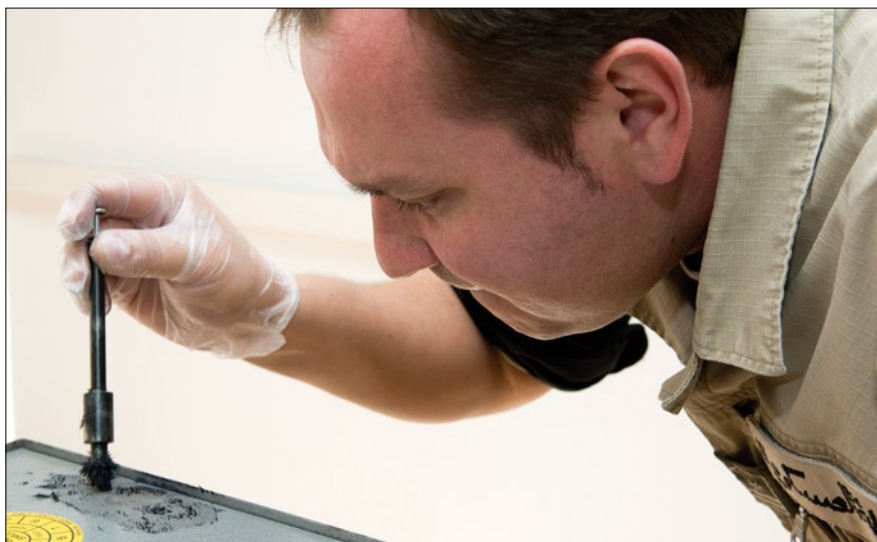
Opportunity makes the thief



The investigator uses state of the art equipment to find traces

After hard month of duty finally you are enjoying your off days on the Mediterranean or Red Sea. Coming out of the refreshing water you are going to take a sunbath at your stretcher and suddenly you recognize that your bag with all your belongings like camera, mobile phone, mp3-player and your wallet with all ID cards, bank cards and your money is gone. Unfortunately, situations like this are hap-

pening everywhere and anyone can be a victim of theft. In cases as mentioned above, the investigators of the MP Platoon are taking over the inquiries in cooperation with the investigation sections of the host countries. Currently the MP Platoon has two investigators; one from the Polish Armed Forces located at the A-Detachment in Camp Ziouani and one from the Austrian Armed Forces in the MP



Hidden fingerprints become visible

HQ located in Camp Faouar. In case of thefts, break and enter, serious traffic accidents, or fatalities involving UNDOF personnel, facilities or properties the MP investigators are fully responsible to conduct all investigations. Such investigations include tasks like leading the interviews, lifting fingerprints, collecting traces, re-enactments and many more. Most crimes like mugging, thefts or assaults can be committed due to the carelessness and boundless trust of the victims and could be prevented just by reducing possible opportunities.

Don't forget: "An open door may tempt a saint!"

*Article by SSgt Ercan Kargi,
MP HQ Inv
Photos by WO II Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer*

MP investigator's recommendations to all UNDOF members:

- Don't leave any items or bags visible or unattended within UN vehicles and public places.
- Use available safes in your hotel room, lock personal or UN items inside and use the additional door chain or security measures before going to sleep.
- Go out with a buddy during night hours.
- Consume a moderate amount of alcohol to prevent robbery.
- Don't go with unknown persons to unknown areas.
- Don't take all your personal items with you, if you do not need them.



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