

GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



April - June 2006
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Dear Reader!



Yet again, since last edition of the Golan Journal, people have changed within the editorial team of the journal. Our Senior Editor Maj Friedrich 'Fritz' Steininger, our Editor Capt Tsutomu 'Tommy' Nemoto and our Senior Proofreader E. Lynn Elvaiah, being our only civilian, stayed the same.

WOII Gernot 'Gerry' Payer the new Force Photographer, Managing Editor and Layout Designer and myself Capt Stefan 'Scotty' Zaiser as Editor, Proofreader and SOPR (Staff Officer Public Relations) newly joined this team.

Gerry, 48 years, born and raised in Carinthia and now living in Vienna has great experience in the mission area, now starting his ninth

tour of duty and also having great experience as a photographer, now starting his sixth mission as such.

For me, 33 years, born, raised and still living in Upper Austria, it is now my third tour of duty within UNDOF, but my first as SOPR and I am very looking forward to this challenging assignment.

So we now have one American, one Japanese and three Austrians in our team and together we work very eagerly and passionately in order to publish the 107th edition of this journal. Let me thank on this occasion all Unit Press Officers and



The editorial team: Scotty, Tommy, Gerry and Fritz

individual authors, both civilian and military, for supplying us with great articles. Without them OUR Golan Journal would not only not reach the standard that it has and we try to maintain, but simply not be possible. So thanks to all of you and please keep up this excellent and very supportive job.

*Yours sincerely,
Capt Stefan Zaiser, SOPR*

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Force Commander's Message

UNDOF - 1

FC UNDOF

Dear Fellow Peacekeepers,

It is, once again, a pleasure for me to address you through a few lines. This Golan Journal has kept some of us busy for the last few weeks, and as expected, it is a publication of the highest quality. Many UNDOF soldiers and civilians contribute to this journal, and as such, I must congratulate and ask you to maintain the excellent support that you have been providing to the editorial team in preparing interesting articles and photographs for us to enjoy.

As the snow melts on Mount Hermon, I can not help but think that another season on the Golan Heights has already come and gone. Time goes by very quickly when we keep busy serving peace; the last few months are no exception. Last spring was the start of a new era in UNDOF history with the integration of the newly arrived Indian Contingent to the mission. Our Indian friends have worked very hard and shown a high level of professionalism in maintaining an excellent level of support to the UNDOF troops. The transition between CANCON and INDCON has been very transparent to all and every logistical task was carried out efficiently by LtCol Ajay Singh and his dedicated soldiers.

Other important events took place in the past few months and it would be a shame if they were to be forgotten. One of them was certainly the visit to our mission of the 3rd UNDOF Force Commander, Austrian General G. Greindl (retired), and a group of 38 ex-UN soldiers called the



Austrian Blue Helmets. Another similar group of 36 ex-UN peacekeepers, this time led by Capt Markku Korkka, also visited the mission area from Finland. I have been extremely honored to be a host to these respectable groups of soldiers, who, like us all, dedicated a portion of their lives to the honorable task of peacekeeping on the Golan Heights. Another important event was the yearly UNDOF briefing given to the A- and B-Side Ambassadors and Embassy staffs. This briefing gave me a privileged platform to explain and discuss our mission and daily challenges to a substantial number of important diplomats, all leaders of either Israeli or Syrian based national missions.

Once again, UNDOF saw other AUSBATT and SLOVCON rotations, and UNDOF soldiers from all nations represented in this mission participated in both the Polish and Austrian marches. These activities, by the way, were organized

and performed in an excellent manner, and another example of multinational comradeship and cooperation. They also demonstrated UNDOF soldiers' will to perform and accomplish their tasks in a most professional manner.

Finally, I would like to take these last few lines to tell you how proud I am to serve as a peacekeeper with you, soldiers and civilian staff, on the Golan Heights. I can only admire your professionalism and dedication in protecting and serving peace in this troubled region. Keep up the good work!

*Thank you Ďiakujem
Danke Merci Dziękuję
Arigato Dhanyavad*

Lieutenant General B. N. SHARMA
Force Commander UNDOF

Chief of Staff Words UNDOF - 2

Comrades of UNDOF!

Once more it is time to review the last few months and it must be mentioned that due to your efforts and your outstanding cooperation UNDOF was able to achieve major steps towards the realisation of this year's main goals.

As you know, not only the majority of the New HQ structure has been implemented, but also the "Integrated HQ structure", which has been approved by DPKO in June 2006, came some decisive steps closer to its realisation.

Let me mention as well some major projects, which are close to their finalization or went into a new stage of development:

- 1) *The inputs for the New SOP 2006 have been collected from all Branches and Sections, put together as a draft and are currently under revision.*
- 2) *The edition of new maps is ongoing; OGG and Line Battalions have supported verification of village names and other details. Continuous fieldwork from within mapping cell, including the assistance of EOD teams within unchecked areas; will help to have the first edition ready in August. Nevertheless these maps will not be expected to be a final version, because the database has to be improved on a continuous basis and therefore cooperation of all UNDOF members is needed further on.*
- 3) *The work group for the new UNDOF tracking system came forward with two courses of action and CISS branch has been tasked not only to find out costs for the*



recommended systems, but also to find out the logistic efforts it will take to implement and to maintain such a system.

It shall further be mentioned that both, the Mission training cell and the Mission Analysis cell have been established and their main tasks over the last few months could be described as follows:

The Mission Training Cell (MTC):

- **Performs induction training for all UNDOF members**
- **Established the Mission training plan**
- **Integration of civilian and military members is ongoing**

The Mission Analysis Cell (MAC):

- **A bi-weekly security review is conducted within UNDOF Mission area**
- **Frequent reports on DPKO policy matters are submitted to New York**

- **The members of the MAC deal with special projects, such as Camp Security and the implementation order for the new HQ Coy.**

Last but not least it shall be mentioned that the new "Integrated Central Registry" started to operate a few weeks ago and future archiving, still to be developed, will take quite some workload off Branches and Sections.

Keeping in mind that my tour of duty will most likely come to its end in September I would like to take once more this opportunity to thank you all for all your efforts, support and cooperation over the last ten months and I wish you all the best not only until your end of tour here in UNDOF, but as well for your assignments in your future duty stations back home or abroad.

I kindly ask you to keep serving UNDOF as well after my departure with our common motto in mind:

Viribus unitis!

Col Andreas Stupka, COS

In November 2005 just as I arrived to take up my new appointment of CAO UNDOF, we received instructions from UNHQ to implement a new structure utilizing Civilian and Military Personnel.

This was a very difficult task as previously Civilian and Military Personnel worked within their own structures. Change is always difficult to implement and the new proposed changes were no exception. Some personnel will always work to continue to do daily things as were always done before but most personnel eventually become convinced of the need for change once the benefits become obvious to them.

Numerous meetings and discussions were conducted as to how best implement the integration structure. Each Section Chief was asked to provide section proposed Organigrams.

These were reviewed and discussed with all staff. This exercise generated much debate which contributed in a very significant way to a better understanding of the workings of each section and the Mission as a whole. In a truly integrated structure, Civilian and Military Personnel are employed in the same Organigram. In some instances Civilian Personnel supervise Military Personnel and in other situations Military Personnel supervise Civilian Personnel.

This is a difficult transition to make and requires goodwill, open and frank communication among all parties, open-minded approaches and trust for successful implementation. The skills and experiences of Civilian and Military Staff must be complementary to ensure that integration is successful. Each post must be filled by experienced, skillful and good performing staff just like a winning team and all players must have an abundance of skills and be outstanding performers.



The benefits of an integrated structure can be summarized as follows:

A. Improved teamwork: Civilian and Military Staff working together. Improved understanding of the day to day needs of the Mission. In the past there was a lack of understanding of the respective roles. This understanding will considerably improve.

B. Improved communication between Civilian and Military Staff. Greater understanding and empathy regarding problems and solutions to problems will be more readily available.

C. Better utilization of the skills of Military Personnel. There have been many instances in Missions where skills of the Military were not identified and thus underutilized and as a result Mission performance suffered. Better utilization of skills of military personnel can be further enhanced by:

- ▶ *JOB descriptions of each post being circulated to all Troop Contributing Countries. Troop Contributing Countries should only send Military Personnel whose skills match the JOB description requirements.*

- ▶ *Military personnel performing on posts in an integrated structure should be requested to stay for a minimum period of 12 months. This would ensure continuity and would contribute to the job.*
- ▶ *Certain key posts in the integrated structure should be for a period of 2 years e.g. CISS post.*
- ▶ *There should be a minimum 2-week handover period for Military Personnel rotating who are in an integrated structure. Detailed accurate handover notes should be prepared for every handover.*

The integrated structure proposed by UNDOF has been approved by UNHQ. The structure was implemented 1st Jun 2006. Some difficulties have been experienced which have been brought to the attention of management and corrective actions have been taken where necessary. The new integrated structure will only be successful if everyone gives their full support. Integration is the way of the future and most Missions now have Integrated Structures.

Mr. Patrick J. Devaney, CAO

New People in UNDOF



The new COO

LtCol Rudolf Zauner came to the Golan-Heights on 23rd Jun 2006 as the new Chief Operations Officer of HQ UNDOF. He was born in Kleinzell, Upper-Austria on the 7th May 1970. After his commissioning from the National Military Academy he joined the 43rd Infantry Regiment (LWSR 43) where he served as Platoon Leader, Training Officer and Company Commander with regular deployments for national border surveillance operations. In 1997, LtCol Zauner was selected for the National Command and General Staff Course and he holds a Master's Degree in Military Science and Leadership. After graduation, he was appointed COS of the National NCO Academy for two years followed by a two year NATO tour where he served as Plans and Policy Officer/J5 at the Allied Command Operations (ACO) in Mons/Belgium. LtCol Zauner also served as the J2 at the EU OHQ during the EU-led Crisis Management Operation CONCORDIA in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).

Before joining us here at UNDOF, he served as Head of Section in the Plans & Policy Division of the General Staff dealing with multinational (EU/NATO) force planning and concept and doctrine development issues. During his service, LtCol Zauner also attended various international courses like the NATO Operational Planning Process Course, the NATO/Partnership for Peace (PfP) Staff Officers' Course for Peace Support Operations and the NATO Assessors' Training Course. He also took part in several NATO/PfP exercises in various staff functions at tactical and operational level. LtCol Zauner is married to Helen and they have three children, Killian, Fiona and Liam. His hobbies include hiking, skiing, mountain biking and relaxing with a good book.



The new CMPO

LtCol Josef Six is Legal Advisor and Deputy Chief Personnel Officer in the Austrian Air Force Command. He joined the Austrian Army in 1985 and was trained to be a Signals Officer, as which he served in various infantry battalions. In 1998 LtCol Six was appointed OiC HQ Coy Army

Logistics School in Vienna. At the same time he started to study law at Vienna University where he graduated with a Masters' degree in 2004.

In 2004/05 LtCol Six attended the postgraduate training on military legal and economic affairs and the 1st Course on International Humanitarian Law at National Defense Academy/Vienna.

In 1988/89 LtCol Six served an 18 month tour within HQ Coy AUSCON/UNFICYP in Famagusta/Cyprus and from 1994 to 1996 he served with AUSBATT and HQ/UNDOF as DO OPS and FSO, followed by FWO in 2000/01.

LtCol Six was born in 1966 in Voecklabruck/Upper Austria and lives in Langenzersdorf near Vienna.



The new DCO AB CO SLOVCON

Maj Juraj Farkas was born on 6th Mar 1971 in Stará Ľubovňa. He comes from the eastern part of Slovakia from a city called Presov.

He graduated from the Military Air-Force Academy in Košice in 1989 and was promoted to Lieutenant. In Slovakian Air Force he went through the following positions: Platoon Commander, Company Commander and Chief of Department.

In 1997 he changed from Air Force to Land Forces and has served in different positions with HQ Army Corps and HQ mechanized brigade.

He has served as Senior Officer and Chief of Planning Department. His current position is Chief of Department for Planning Operations on Mechanized Brigade. Maj Farkas is married to Alena and they have three children: Michal (12), Alena (10) and Juraj (8). His hobbies are reading and sports, especially volleyball, football, swimming and ice hockey. This is his first foreign mission.

Visits to UNDOF



Visit of Gen Sverre Diesen, Chief of Defense Norway. Met with the FC and encouraged Norwegian and other OGG UNMOs (19th Apr 2006)



Visit of Finland ex-peacekeepers to POLBATT Area. Enjoyed nostalgic time at each position (25th Apr 2006)



Visit of LtGen Noboru Wakura, Commanding General of 2nd Division and boss of CO J-CON, JGSDF. Inspected J-CON activities. Stimulated snow removal soldier near HS (15th-18th May 2006)



Visit of cadets from Germany, fact finding UNDOF and UNTSO activities. Visited OP51, CZ, Posn 22 and Mt. Bental (12th Jun 2006)



Visit of BGen Rene Segur-Cabanac with students of Austrian General Staff Course. Educated about Middle East situation and visiting CF, Quneitra and Posn 27 (16th Jun 2006)

Other visitors to UNDOF

Visit of MGen Muneo Sakakieda, Commanding General of MP, JGSDF. Visited FPM and acknowledge UNDOF MP activities. He could conform "All of Military Police is a family". (10th-13th Apr 2006)

Visit of Col G. Jaishanker, Director Staff in charge of UN mission in India Army HQ. Inspected LOGBATT activities. He is first Indian visitor to UNDOF as an official visitor. (22nd-26th Apr 2006)

Visit of MGen Kjell Narve Ladviesen, The Commander of Land Force. Visited the FC and encouraged Norwegian and other OGG UNMOs. (31st May 2006)

Visit of Excellence Jean-Michel Veranneman, Ambassador of Belgium in Israel. Visited CZ, OP51 and Mt. Bental. The FC made UNDOF Briefing to the delegation. (7th Jun 2006)

32nd annual 'Accident Curve' - Ceremony

In memoriam of the first four Austrian casualties killed in action on the Golan Heights on 25th Jun 1974, each year a ceremony is held in commemoration of these brave soldiers of the Austrian Battalion. Soldiers in the service of peace from the very beginning.

MCpl Hans Hofer, 30 years
Cpl Helmut Sturm, 21 years
LCpl Walter Neuhauser, 27 years
Pte Alija Voloder, 20 years

Four names chiseled in stone some 2100m above sea level, safeguarded by a monument on the eastern side of Mount Hermon. The monument was erected by Austrian soldiers of 1st Coy AUSBATT in memoriam of these casualties and as a reminder for everybody passing Accident Curve.



Photo by WOII Gernot Payer

Commemoration in the "Accident Curve"

History of the accident

In week one of June 1974 the Austrian Contingent of the United Nations Emergency Forces II moved from Suez Channel to Syria as new Austrian Battalion Golan.

32 years ago a crash of an Israeli pilot resulted in a search & rescue mission for a team under command of MCpl Hofer. AUSBATT was wrongly informed about the mine status on Mount Hermon and its

streets. By mistake the road up to Hermon Base was declared mine-free and existing mine-fields had not been mentioned, causing this terrible accident.

Because of the safe mine status no more mine checks were conducted and the driver Cpl Josef Schrattenegger and four of his comrades passed the unmarked anti-tank-mine belt with a Land Rover in vicinity of today's reporting point

C211 (halfway up to Pos Hermon Base from Pos 12). Due to the strength of the explosion the driver was thrown out of the vehicle and the other four were found dead some 40 meters away of the accident site. Just the driver

luckily survived due to the swift reaction of the Syrian Army, who sent a helicopter and evacuated Cpl Schrattenegger to an Army hospital, where with an emergency operation his life was saved. Also from the Israeli side, quickly, an Army physician and medic were sent in order to help. However, the other four victims were killed instantly and all help was in vain. Misleading and wrong information caused this terrible mine accident. Mines are silent and cruel witnesses of any war. Today 32 years after, soldiers on the Golan Heights are still accompanied by the presence of mines. Each year on the 25th of June, soldiers of 'Edelweiss-Coy' and UNDOF in general commemorate those four young and brave soldiers who were killed so dramatically.

Article by Capt Jürgen Mayer,
OIC 1st Coy/AB



The Land Rover after the accident

Austrian General Staff Officers Visit Middle East

Members of the 17th General Staff Officers Course tour Jordan, Syria, UNDOF, Lebanon and UNIFIL in a unique journey



After a Briefing near the border triangle Jordan – Syria – Israel

The planning and liaison efforts to arrange this strategic-operational visit had been going on for months but, finally an interesting tour program was arranged by the organizing parties. 33 course participants under supervision of BGen Rene Segur-Cabanac and Col August Reiter were professionally guided by local military representatives and the Austrian Military Attaché in Syria, BGen Grabner, who coordinated the whole journey with success.

As the United Nations Forces play an important role in Middle East Peacekeeping, COS Col Andreas Stupka, accompanied the entourage to present his experiences and views to the Austrian visitors.

The tour started on 12th Jun 2006 with the arrival of an Austrian “Hercules” aircraft in Aqaba, Jordan, where a wave of friendliness and summer heat welcomed the officers. Apart from Jordan’s

historical and natural heritage, such as Petra, Jerash, Umm Qais and the stunning Wadi Rum, the 35 visitors were mainly introduced to various parts of the Jordanian Military Forces, whose regional commanders organized briefings and demonstrations of their soldier’s skills.

After four days and a stopover in the northwestern-most corner of Jordan, the journey continued to the Syrian border where the party was “handed-over” to representatives of the Syrian MOD. Besides visits to Damascus’ Old City, Maalula and the Syrian Staff College, a day trip to UNDOF and Posn 27 in Qunaitra was on the agenda.

Now it was up to Col Andreas Stupka, CODD LtCol Gerd E. Schrimpf, CO AUSBATT LtCol Christian Friedhuber and the OiC 2nd Coy/AB Capt Michael Krug to elaborately brief and discuss peacekeeping issues and the current situation in and around UNDOF. In

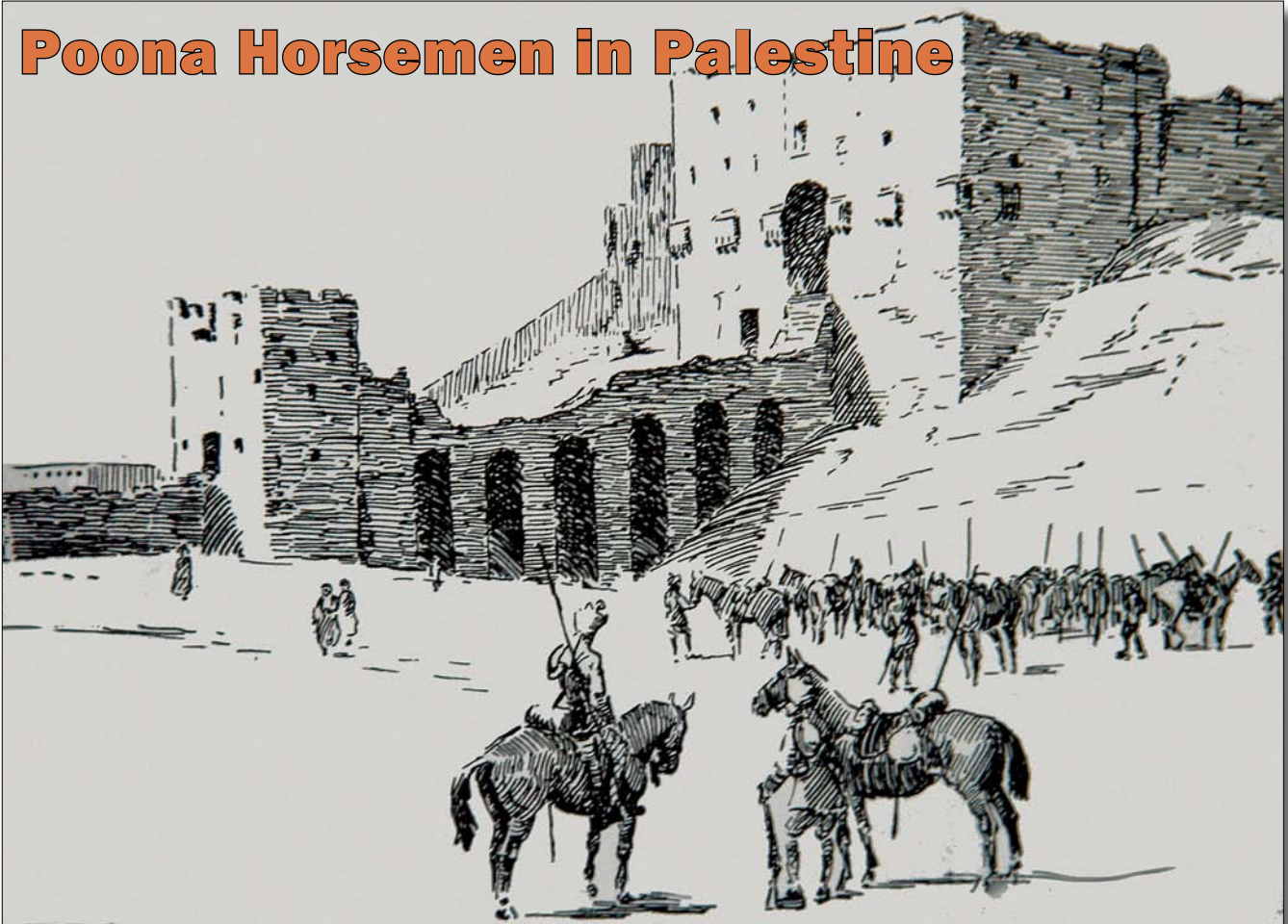
the meanwhile, little rest time, the heat and exotic meals had made several tour participants try UNDOF’s medical support and empty stocks of medication for stomach relief... A reminder for newcomers to the Middle East that peacekeeping in such an environment is not just a “piece of cake”.

Nevertheless the journey went on to Lebanon with all the excitement of a nation that tries to find its way to peace and prosperity. Some parts of the country are still in trouble, though, and the final visit to UNIFIL taught everyone another important lesson on strategies and politics, in an area torn by war, mistrust and often political stagnation.

For the Austrian General Staff Officers Course the journey ended with the Hercules plane taking off from Beirut to Pristina/Kosovo on 20th Jun 2006.

*Article and Photo by:
WO II Armin Hermann*

Poona Horsemen in Palestine



Aleppo, Entrance to the citadel - 26th Oct 1918

INDCON is formed around a core group of Poona Horse (aka 17 Horse) an elite cavalry (now armoured) regiment of the Indian army, raised in 1817.

While INDCON only just took over LOGBATT on 25th Mar 2006, Poona Horse has been in the area before, 87 years ago as part of the British Indian Army in the First World War when it fought in France, Flanders and Palestine. In Palestine as this area was then called, the Regiment participated with its customary élan in what was possibly the last and one of the most successful horsed cavalry campaigns in recent history.

This is a very brief history of that campaign. If the names of the places mentioned seem familiar, when you visit them again, pause for a moment

and picture if you can, squadrons of mounted men, the pennants on their lances and the trails of their turbans catching the wind as the sun glints on their lances & sabers; together with their horses the most terrifying war machine on the battle field of the day; The Cavalryman.

In April 1918 the Poona Horse disembarked at Alexandria on arrival from France. Along with the Decan Horse (another Indian Cavalry Regt) and the Sherwood Rangers, the Regiment formed the 14 Cavalry Brigade of the 5th Cavalry Division, one of four mounted divisions making up the desert Mounted Corps under Gen Allenby, the commander of the forces serving in Egypt & Palestine. In June 1918, the corps was moved to the Jordan Valley where deserting Turkish soldiers reported

a great fear of its lances. Allenby had begun his preparations for his final offensive, which included an elaborate deception plan. On 19th Sep 1918 the offensive began with the infantry breaking through the Turkish defences; the Cavalry corps followed through and rapidly exploited the breach. By midnight 30th Sep 1918 the desert mounted corps was at the gates of Damascus with orders to encircle the city.

An interesting event on the march to Damascus occurred when Alpha squadron of Poona Horse encountered a party of Arabs and, mistaking them for the enemy, charged. The Arabs scattered, exposing to view a large car with a European seated in it. Risaldar Major Hamir Singh, taking him to be a spy, immediately rode up and demanded



Daffadar (Sgt) of the Poona Horse 1884

his surrender. The European turned out to be Col TE Lawrence, the fabled 'Lawrence of Arabia'; It is not known if 'El Aurens' was amused by the encounter. At 1015hrs on the morning of 1st Oct 1918, the Regiment

entered Damascus and after the rest of the Brigade closed in, the advance through the city was continued. The Arabs of Damascus, liberated from their Turkish oppressors, gave a joyful welcome to troops.

In the next phase of the campaign, the Cavalry was ordered to take Rayak and from there on to Aleppo which the Regiment reached on 25th Oct 1918. On the 31st October the news reached the Poona Horse that the previous day the Armistice had been signed in Mudros Harbour aboard the Battleship 'Agamemnon'

The Poona Horse remained at Aleppo as part of the army of occupation. Apart from the occasional excitement, time here was spent in training and in various forms of sports. A polo ground and a race-course were made.

In both sports, the Regiment found no difficulty in keeping up its reputation. In the first race meeting held on 1st Feb 1919, the Poona Horse won six out of the seven events, Risaldar Major Hamir Singh winning two of them; it is hoped that the Jawans of Poona Horse placed their bets loyally!

A polo tournament was also held and won by the Regiment, who beat the 18th Lancers in the final. The first ball thrown in, in this, the first-war Polo Tournament, was retrieved and presented to the Regiment. It was suitably mounted and is still being kept in the Officer's Mess.

Article by Maj Jayesh Pawar

The photos have been extracted from the book, 'The story of the Poona Horse' by LtGen Hanut Singh, MVC now retired, an ex Commandant of Poona Horse and a winner of the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC), India's second highest war time gallantry award.

Peace Building Operation 'Freedom Jump'



On 27th Jun 2006 some UNDOF personnel took part in a sportive event with the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) covering the official UN request to consider the use of sports to accomplish peace-building goals.

With this in mind the unique role and contribution that UNPKOs can make has been discussed recently at UN sub-platforms with regard to supporting and facilitating sporting activities aimed at furthering peace building efforts. On a positive note, UN officials have been informed of the interest of leading sport bodies, including International Olympic Committee (IOC) and 'Federation Internationale de Football Association' (FIFA), to support



'Freedom Jumpers' before the exciting event

gestions COS Col Andreas Stupka, was tempted to watch out for opportunities. On behalf of the Chief of Staff, Liaison Officer 'Alpha', Maj Manfred Urregg approached the IDF and his efforts resulted in an appointment for a parachute event, where nine UNDOF personnel took part. The nominees had to have basic parachute training in the past and were asked to produce records reflecting their basic skills, prior to the jump. On 25th Jun 2006 the parachutists under the command of Col Stupka departed from Camp Faouar for their peace building operation. Upon arrival UNDOF 'paratroopers' joined about 60 veterans from all over the world. On 26th Jun 2006 all jumpers were scheduled for ground training to recall basic procedures. Chatting about previous experiences as well as the event ahead created for all a short night. 'Operation Freedom Jump' started on 27th Jun 2006 early before dawn. After a little while the 'UN Peace Jumpers'

arrived at the drop zone ready to jump out of the plane. Before the final destination was reached, which obviously was the ground and not the air, they felt sixty seconds of peace and quietness.

After having landed safely each and everyone felt overwhelmed at what had been

achieved. Some airborne fellows had to do real mission jumps in



Maj Zaller with 84 year old veteran from D-Day (6th Jun 1944)

future sporting initiatives and activities of UNPKOs. In addition all missions have been encouraged to advise what sporting activities could be undertaken. Based on these sug-



Col Stupka as fully equipped 'paratrooper'

their lives but the character of this jump was not war but to build up measures for peace. This goal has been implemented at least during the final ceremony, which topped the event off. Mission accomplished for our 'UNDOF Peace Jumpers'!

Article by Maj Roman Zaller, FCEO

UN Peace Nobel Prize Medal - Award to UNDOF Veterans

The AUSBATT Medal Parade took place at the Camp Faouar parade square on the 29th Apr 2006 including a unique event. What was so remarkable about it was the formation at the very right of the deployment of troops.

It was the so called 'Veteran Platoon' comprised of 22 UNDOF soldiers who lined up ready to be awarded with the 'UN Peace Nobel Prize Medal'. UN Peacekeepers were awarded with the Peace Nobel Prize in the year 1988. According to outlined regulations of this award all UN soldiers are to be awarded who had served one tour of duty prior to and in 1988. As a matter of fact four out of these 22 were soldiers of the very first mission on the Golan Heights, when troops were deployed from



Sinai into the AOS in 1974. Real Veterans! CWO Hermann Utz was appointed Admin-NCO and organized all backstage efforts to get the medals delivered on time. When COS Col Andreas Stupka was approached with this idea it was finally not difficult to get his approval for this special parade. FC LtGen Bala N. Sharma seemed to be delighted when he awarded his men



FC awarding CWO Hermann Utz

and fellow peacekeepers this specific medal.

It was the veterans who developed the mission of UNDOF and its current appearance. It was also the veterans who served their tours under more difficult conditions and faced a stranger environment than they were used to from back home.

All of them experienced several things in their lives but joined again and again in this mission, becoming finally veterans in common.

May I conclude this address to the veterans by saying: "It was an honour to be your Officer in Charge for this special ceremony and unique moment!"



Photos by Sgt Thomas Aigner

'Veteran Platoon' after having received Peace Nobel Prize Medal

Article by:
Maj Roman Zaller, FCEO



Everything changes in SLOVCON

SLOVCON Rotation VI/2006 facing with adaptation to new conditions.

On 6th Jun 2006, the first part of new rotation of AUSBATT landed on Syrian ground at the International airport in Damascus, the capital of the Syrian Arab Republic. Commanding Officer of SLOVCON, Maj Juraj Farkas and his troops, after long preparations in Slovakia and after a cooperative exercise in Austrian Goetzendorf stood ready to fill operational tasks in the UNDOF mission on the Golan Heights.

Everything became new for Slovaks in Syria. Starting from extremely hot weather conditions, Islamic culture and architecture, through to strange driving traditions in the country, undeveloped rural areas ending with living in small communities inside the AOS and English as the mother language in UNDOF.

SLOVCON's staff is brand new!

There came mainly VIP personnel of SLOVCON with the first flight and so-called "key personnel" had changed at once. All "oldhands" left and had been replaced by "young geckoes".

The positions as follows were refreshed with new blood in SLOVCON's staff: CO SLOVCON/DCO AUSBATT, SMO SLOVCON/DSMO AUSBATT, SO and DO. Except SMO, there was no one from officers listed above, who had previous experience with peacekeeping missions as well as the cooperation with members of foreign armies. Outgoing members of SLOVCON left here, in the Golan a very good impression on their Austrian colleges who praise



the excellent cooperation with "the Slovak quartet".

The beginning of the mission was for them rather different. Newcomers were faced with the language barrier and it took a short time to become accustomed to English conversation on official briefings as well as on friendly conversations with a multinational company. Finally, step by step, all officers of SLOVCON staff started to talk after their initial shyness had disappeared.

But the language barrier was

not the only obstacle. It seemed for them crucial to acquire experiences and to understand the system of tasks and duties to be performed in AUSBATT and UNDOF as a whole. After 3 weeks of continual activity in the mission it is obvious that Slovaks are a useful part of the AUSBATT formation.

The Supply Officer has found the secrets of Golan logistics and now he is a real supportive element for the 3rd coy. SMO had taken care of the first patients and she has obtained great popularity in Camp Faouar.

The Duty officer is another important member of SLOVCON, who is able to fulfil his operational tasks in cooperation with the Austrian colleagues keeping a smile on his face. He is permanently ready to ensure the flow of information among Coys, AUSBATT and HQ UNDOF.



Cpl Bacova and MCpl Hudecova during cleaning day, restoring Slovak flag on Posn 10



MCpl Hudecova and MCpl Darazova conducting EIA patrol

Majority of 3rd Coy has gone...

The 3rd Coy of AUSBATT had to face rather more serious problems. As was mentioned above there was no one from the “old” staff to help newcomers with some troubles that could appear. The 3rd Coy experienced the same situation like the battalion staff did. No officers experienced with service in peacekeeping missions came, namely Coy Commander (OiC 3rd Coy), Deputy Coy Commander (2iC 3rd Coy), Platoon Leader, Finance NCO, Personnel NCO as well as Quartermaster NCO. With such a company of inexperienced officers and NCOs, Capt Zdenko Targos (OiC 3rd Coy) had to start his tour of duty in UNDOF. To make it

even more difficult, the HQ of Slovak Armed Forces started with the experiment that consisted of deployment of female ranks for guard duty on positions mixed with male ranks. Serving with UNDOF, there are no



MCpl Hudecova on EIB patrol

other female ranks positioned in the field. So Capt Targos is responsible for five of them. Now, it is a matter of time if they prove their readiness to perform the same quality of duty

as their male colleagues do. Capt Targos is optimistic, and in accord with his previous experiences in Slovakia, he is sure that they will achieve the same standard like their male counterparts of the contingent. Anyway, in Slovakia, female soldiers are appointed on the same positions like males are, including riflemen as well as Department Commanders in HQ of Slovak Armed forces.

There is one special saying in our country. It says: “The new broom sweeps the best”, so we will see how it works here...

*Article by Lt Marian Simon
DO SLOVCON/AUSBATT
in cooperation with:
CaptMD Ivana Lakotova
SMO SLOVCON
Photos by Maj Juraj Farkas*

National Holiday in Polish Contingent - POLBATT

The 3rd of May is a special date in the history of Poland. On this day in 1791 Sejm, Poland's highest legislative authority instituted the Constitution. This was only the second time in the world after the United States that this type of act took place and the first time in Europe.



Participants of 3rd of May anniversary ceremony

This document healed the state and made reliable foundations. The constitution gave the chance for rapid economic growth and creating ovules of the modern State-system. It was a symbol of patriotism, consideration and competence, whereto appealing to following generations of Poles fighting for independence.

As part of this important anniversary, at this time soldiers of POLBATT celebrated their own national holiday for the first time in Camp Ziouani, and then again on 5th May 2006 in Tiberias. The place of the ceremony was not accidental, because Tiberias not for the first time entered meritoriously into the history of Polish Soldiers on the Golan Heights.

In 2005 in the yard of the not large, but generally well-known church of Saint Peter, was revealed a memory board at the monument raised after the World War II by soldiers of General Anders' Army. Being in garrison on these grounds

after the evacuation from the Soviet Union to Persia this was found as a place to visit and with a possibility of convalescence.

Hosts of this important solemnity were: The Consul in Tel Aviv Mr. Edward Dobrowolski and Commander of the Polish Military Contingent LtCol Zbigniew Paduch.

In the ceremony participated: Charge' D'affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Israel Mr. Janusz Omietański, Military Attaché Col Ireneusz Drażyk, representatives of UNDOF and other military contingents, representatives of the Polish minority in Israel and representatives of various organizations, monasteries and churches.

This solemn program contained the pronouncement of the Consul Mr. Dobrowolski, the speech of the Representative of the Polish Minority in Israel about the anniversary of the resolution of the 3rd of May Constitution and a statement of CO POLBATT LtCol Paduch on the topic 'Fighting-Track of Corps II' proved by Gen Władysław Anders. The official part of the solemnity was finished with the pronouncement of the Military Attaché Col Drażyk and the consecration of the commemorative plaque by Chaplain-Major Józef Michalik.

An essential element of the ceremony was to create an international affirmative picture of UNDOF and the UNDOF Polish Military Con-



LtCol Dariusz Karwinski, LtCol Andrzej Trzaska, LtCol Zbigniew Paduch and LtCol Ajay Singh at flower ceremony

tingent in the context of pursuance of mandatory assignments by soldiers fulfilling the service under the blue UN flag.

*Article and Photos by:
Capt Paweł Szyller, PressO*

SPRING MARCHES

Soldiers of POLBATT, apart from fulfilling their mandatory duties, also participate in cultural and sports events. The presence of Polish soldiers is noticeable thanks to their organized "Polish Marches", which is what soldiers from other countries, also fulfilling peacekeeping-services on the Golan Heights, call it.



Signal Platoon Leader from POLBATT Lt Anita Gajewska during Scorpion March

In April 2006 three route-marches were arranged: On the 8th 'Coyote March', on the 22nd 'Scorpion March' and on the 29th 'Wadi Patrol' - the names of the marches come from the regions where they take place. The level of difficulty differs and depends not only on the terrain but also on the weather conditions of the routes.

The most difficult and at the same time the most attractive march, because of its beautiful views, was the "Wadi March". 192 competitors participated. Among the participants there were representa-

tives from HQ UNDOF including Chief of Staff Col Andreas Stupka and his deputy LtCol Andrzej Trzaska, representatives of the con-



POLBATT and INDCON soldiers during Coyote March

tingents from India also including the CO INDCON LtCol Ajay Singh, from Japan the CO J-CON

Maj Kazushi Ueno, Austria, Slovakia, representatives of the Embassy in Damascus with the military Attaché Col Michal Roszczyna and host of the march LtCol Zbigniew Paduch in charge of POLBATT.

The route of the march led through the bed of the canyon, at differences of heights of about 700m. The participants had to show physical stamina, since the temperature came up to 50°C and the light gusts of wind could be sensed only at the very end of the route. The last 3km were given the name 'the wall of the tears' by soldiers.

An unpleasant incident occurred during the march, when one of the Polish soldiers fainted due to the extreme conditions in the canyon. His friends and the health-services of the Polish contingent actively participated in this surprising event by evacuating him with great sacrifice to a place, where he could receive professional help.

The CO POLBATT LtCol Paduch, noted that this incident confirmed that you can always count on the help, sacrifice and devotion of your friends.

Article by:

Capt Paweł Szyller, PressO

Photos by: WO Andrzej Kozicki

Celebration of “Boys’ Day”

On 5th May 2006 J-CON celebrated “Boys’ Day” which is a Japanese national holiday. Although it is not known precisely when this celebration began, it was probably in the 8th Century.

Today it is also called “Children’s Day”, the day to emphasize the importance of respecting the character of children and promoting their good health and happiness. Children express their gratitude for tender love and care that they receive from their parents.

Families with boys fly carp shaped streamers from high poles as shown in the picture.

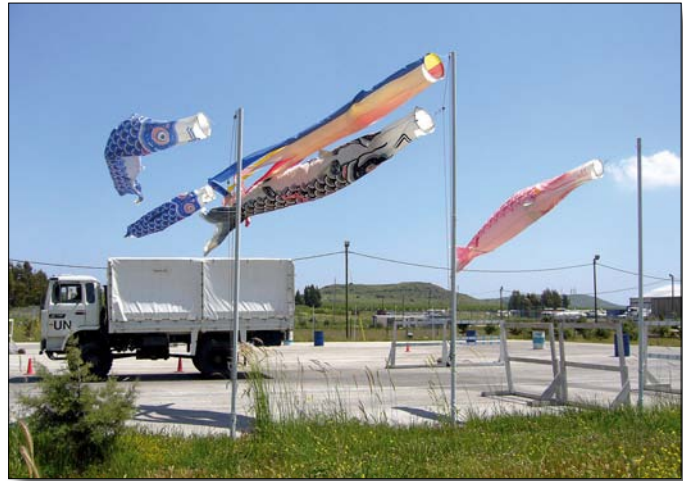
The huge, gay-colored streamers are called ‘Koi-Nobori’, made of cloth, which fill with wind and seem to swim in the air. ‘Koi-Nobori’ has become the symbol of Boys’ Day because the Japanese consider it the most spirited of fish, so full of energy and power that it can fight its way up swift-running streams and cascades.

Because of its strength and determination to overcome all obstacles, it stands for courage and the ability to attain high goals. The carp is an appropriate symbol to encourage manliness and overcoming life’s difficulties leading to consequent success.

Of course for girls we celebrate “Girls’ Day”. It is on 3rd of March. On this day, families with

girls display dolls relying on ancient Japanese tradition.

Article by Lt Shuhei Kawasaki
Photo by SSgt Hiromichi Sato



‘Koi-Nobori’ at the Parade Square, which fills with wind and seems to swim in the air

Rodeo Competition

A recent rodeo competition was held on 23rd and 24th May 2006. This competition was held in order to maintain and provide safety driving techniques and safety awareness for UNDOF soldiers.

Until this competition, J-CON had enjoyed five consecutive overall wins since IV rodeo competition. Of course, J-CON was aiming for a new record “six consecutive overall wins” in IX rodeo competition.

Unfortunately there was not enough time for competition preparation. All J-CON competitors had to do not only driving training but also transportation tasks. So we were training very hard day and night, in addition to our tasks. Furthermore we worried about new participants – INDCON! They were training attentively and they also had begun training for 5t truck since April 2006. All we had to do was believe

in ourselves. In the competition, we had great rivals – all contingents, and severe battles took place. But all participants held fast to be fair.

This consequence brought good results – solidarity, self confidence, a feeling of achievement and especially, awareness of safety driving to J-CON members. As part



J-CON - The overall winning team

of LOGBATT, J-CON is mainly responsible for second line transport to augment contingents’ resources and we usually perform our tasks using large trucks or semi-trailers. In transport, cargo should be convoyed “on time and in place” requiring safe driving techniques and safety awareness allowing us to arrive at destinations faultlessly. I believe that our daily “safety minds” stood out in the competition.

Winning is important. But safe driving is most important for each one of us, including other UNDOF members, to accomplish our mission. We appreciate this unique opportunity.

Article by Lt I Yuzuru Muratani, MTO

25th Anniversary of the 'NCO-Feitl Club'

The 'NCO-Feitl Club' of AUSBATT is for deepening and strengthening comradeship. The 'NCO-Feitl Club' also supports the SOS-Children village in Damascus and other charitable institutions. The Club doesn't pay a fixed amount of money per month to the institutions, but it buys urgently needed equipment or furniture. The children exclusively use all objects.



This was the intent when the 'NCO-Feitl Club' had been founded 25 years ago, exactly on 23rd Apr 1981. It is written in the articles of the club. Meanwhile the 'NCO Feitl Club' is the eldest, permanently existing institution in Camp Faouar and develops comradeship within the camp all of the time.

The main focus is on the SOS childrens' village in Damascus. The 16 'honorable members' support the SOS childrens' village not only by spending money, but sometimes the club is also the purchaser of furni-

ture and other things for donation afterwards. In 2004 private companies got orders for construction work with overall costs of \$5,000. From June 2005 to June 2006 the 'NCO-Feitl Club' bought for the new buildings refrigerators, carpets, parts of kitchens, TV's and some other necessary equipment for \$7,500. A local worker in the kitchen of Camp Faouar got \$1,000. He needed the money for his son to pay the bill for a heart-operation. Not all money or donations come from members of the club themselves, it would not be possible; many volun-

teers and friends of the 'NCO-Feitl Club' support their parties, organized by the Club and donate money. At the 25th anniversary celebration in April 2006 in Camp Faouar a great deal of money was donated during an auction.

The 'NCO-Feitl Club' is important for the social life within Camp Faouar. It is also an institution in support. We all hope, that the 'NCO-Feitl Club' will exist another 25 years or at least as long as UNDOF exists.

Article by WOII Erich Jauernig

MP on Alpha Detachment



A-Det MPs, LtCol Larry Blum, Regimental MPs from POLBATT and J-CON, Doghandlers, FPM

Give me Mister! Give me Mister! Everyone in this area knows this sentence very well. But not the MP from Alpha Detachment because they are responsible for the entire area of Israel, not including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip! From Haifa in the North down to Eilat in the South!

Yes, it is really an enviable job and we from "A" Detachment know it very well. The Detachment is located within Camp Ziouani

and consists of eight Military Police members from four different nationalities. The Detachment Commander is an Austrian Warrant Officer and his 2iC is a Warrant Officer from India. One Slovakian, one Austrian, one Indian and three Polish MP's, of which one of them is the Special Investigator, are working together at this Detachment on a 24/7 basis.

We work very closely with the Polish RMP and the two Japanese

MP members on one side and on the other side we have close liaison with the GILO's from Alpha Gate! Our duties are to patrol in the



MP at work



FPM Capt Jan Witkowski in front of MP Platoon

entire area, to provide escorts for things such as movement of weapons, VIPs, rotations etc. We conduct traffic control, radar checks; searches of UN vehicles and baggage for drugs and explosives, and are sometimes assisted by the Austrian dog handlers and their dogs. We also investigate traffic accidents, break and enters, and other serious incidents, crimes and breaches of service regulations.

In the past, all members of Alpha Detachment did a great job and I am sure, it will also be done in future!

Article by:

WO Jürgen Haid, MP A-Det Cmdr

CHANGE OF COMMAND IN DAMASCUS

On 28th Apr 2006 Observer Group Golan-Damascus (OGG-D) hosted a Change of Command Ceremony at ISMAC House in Damascus. The ceremony was officiated by the Deputy Chief of Staff UNTSO Col Roy Grottheim.

The Change of Command took place between the outgoing Chief OGG-D LtCol Willem Steijlen from the Netherlands and incoming Chief OGG-D LtCol Gerd E. Schrimpf from Austria.

In his address for the Change of Command Ceremony, COS UNTSO Maj-Gen Clive Lilley congratulated LtCol Steijlen for a job extremely well done and wished Willem every success on his retirement.

A special welcome was also afforded to the new Station Chief LtCol Schrimpf who is now serv-



LtCol Willem Steijlen hands over to LtCol Gerd E. Schrimpf

ing for his fifth time in the Middle East. On completion of the ceremony the new Chief OGG-D LtCol Schrimpf invited all guests to a small reception in the ISMAC

House, which was beautifully prepared by the ISMAC cook, Ayman Alsyuffi.

Article by Maj Serge Boissonneault, Deputy COGG-D



New Chief OGG-D

LtCol Gerd E. Schrimpf was born in Graz, Austria in 1959. After graduating from High school in 1977 he joined the Austrian Armed Forces and started his military training at the Infantry OCS.

In 1978 he attended the Austrian Military Academy where he graduated as 2nd Lieutenant Logistics Branch (Technical Engineer) in 1981. From 1981 until 2000 he was serving with Logistics Regiment 1 in various functions more specifically Platoon Leader, Company Commander, Operation Officer as well as Deputy Commanding Officer.

During this period he participated in several UN missions, namely UNDOF in 1983 and 1985, UNTSO/

OGG-T in the Middle East as UNMO and OPSO in 1989-1991 and IFOR in Bosnia in 1996. In 2000 he was assigned to the G3/Training section of HQ II Corps where he was responsible for OC and NCOC training. In 2002 he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and transferred to the Austrian International Operations Command (AIOC) to build up the newly formed PsyOps section.

In 2004 he was given Command of AUSBATT/UNDOF on the Golan Heights. After that assignment he became Branch-Head PR & PSYOPS-Division at the AIOC. LtCol Schrimpf is a graduate of the Austrian Army Command and Staff College and holds a Masters Degree in Defense and Security Management.

Married to Sabine Schrimpf-Goeritzer they are proud parents of two sons Sebastian and Georg.

Syrian children with Polish soldiers

Helping children from orphanages is a praiseworthy matter that should be followed. With such an initiative soldiers of POLBATT, fulfilling the peace mission on Golan Heights came out.

On 21st Apr 2006, Polish soldiers invited children from the orphanage run by *Syrian Arab Association For SOS Childrens' Village* in Damascus. The children were welcomed by the Force Commander LtGen Bala N. Sharma, and by the CO POLBATT LtCol Zbigniew Paduch.

These children had a chance to see the most important places in POLBATT AOR, and take a ride in armored vehicles that are used by Polish soldiers. Games and sports competitions were provided, as well as a presentation of Polish soldiers in action, a presentation of equipment and many, many sweets. The greatest attraction was visiting the Wadi Canyon, where children could admire the breathtaking views.

This day of unforgettable experiences, finished with Polish soldiers having a military dinner and LtCol Paduch handing out small gifts and special certificates to all children for their attendance on Golan Heights.

Article by:
Capt Paweł Szyller PressO
Photos by WO Andrzej Kozicki



Syrian teacher and children on Posn 60



Syrian children from orphanages together with Polish soldiers

Charity for Children's Hospital in Damascus

Helping children is always praiseworthy, especially children who are in the hospital at such a very young age. Those children often rely more on community help than anyone else. One might think that this charity project equals only a drop in the sea. Very likely so, but it was a very good start nevertheless.

It all started early this year, when Force Commander (FC) LtGen Bala N. Sharma stated that some funds donated by UNDOF soldiers were available for charitable purposes. His wife Mrs. Bibhu Sharma suggested supporting needy children at the Damascus Children's Hospital in some way.

After that the Syrian Deputy Minister of Education arranged an appointment for the FC to meet with Chief of Oncology, Dr. Eyad Torfah, and to discuss the best possible way to support Damascus Children's Hospital, hence the attention to the needs of the children.

Dr. Torfah informed LtGen Sharma and Mrs. Sharma about the shortage of life saving drugs. Also, a shortage of infusion pumps for delivery of medication was recog-



Mrs. Sharma with a baby in Damascus Childrens' Hospital

nized. So either medication or infusion pumps would have made the hospital's life a lot easier.

Once the most urgent needs were discovered, LtCol Vani Suryam, UNDOF Force Medical Officer (FMO) was asked to research the availability and cost of these life saving drugs and infusion pumps. Together with UNDOF Procurement Assistant Suleiman Naser possible ways of purchasing those items were found. A local pharmaceutical company was chosen to deliver two infusion pumps and cancer medicine all together for about \$7,000.

Finally, in the beginning of May 2006 this worthy project came to a successful end when Mrs. Sharma went along with LtCol Suryam to the Childrens' Hospital and presented to Dr. Torfah those brand new infusion pumps and the medicine.

*Article by Capt Stefan Zaiser, SOPR
Photos by Sgt Thomas Aigner*



Mrs. Sharma and LtCol Suryam handing over an infusion pump to Dr. Torfah

Crest of *United Nations Disengagement Observer Force*



- ◆ **Burgundy** symbolizes the purple haze at sunset and the native thistle
 - ◆ **White** indicates snow and the long winter season on Mount Hermon
 - ◆ **Black** acts for volcanic rocks and stones on the Golan Heights
 - ◆ **Blue** stands for the Area of Limitation (AOL)
 - ◆ **Red** represents the Area of Separation (AOS)
-