

# GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



April - June 2010  
No. 123

# DEAR READER!

This issue of the Golan Journal will cover the activities of UNDOF during the springtime. Due to the tireless work of the various Press Officers we hope to provide you with interesting stories of the many events within the mission.

Due to the continuous rotation of UNDOF's military staff, the Media/Public Relations Section faced a major change as Maj Alexander Unterweger has left the mission after two years in the section and was replaced by Maj Gerold Fraidl, who arrived at the beginning of June. On this occasion I would like to thank Maj Unterweger for his continuous support and ambitious endeavors to improve the standards of our section.

Once again I would like to highlight the efforts of the Press Officers who contribute to the Golan Journal and regrettably say goodbye to the ones who have left the mission: Capt Günther Voitic (AUSBATT), Capt Noli Kanashiro (PHILBATT), Maj Jörgen Savmark (OGG) and welcome Maj Thomas Kobosil, Maj Ricardo Ellorda and Capt Richard Buchan. In the MP Platoon Capt Floro

Canaleja took over the responsibilities of Press Officer.

In this edition it gives me great pleasure to present articles about the UNDOF Engineer Section and UNDOF welfare activities. We also cover the "Apple Crossing", the "Barreling Project" and many other events in the contingents.

Look into it and enjoy it!



*Our team: Karl, Gerold, Arnold and Muneyuki*

*Yours sincerely,  
Maj Karl Curin, SOPR*

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**Front (Page 1):** SISU on Patrol  
*Photo by MCpl Andreas Hoffmann, FHQ-Coy*

**Back (Page 24):** "Accident Curve" Memorial, 1<sup>st</sup> Coy, AUSBATT  
*Photo by MSgt Gernot Mair, AUSBATT*

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OGG - Capt Richard Buchan



# Force Commander's Message

## *To the Peacekeepers of UNDOF!*

*On the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2010, UNDOF celebrated its 36<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Established to maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria, UNDOF has been, and continues to be successful in enforcing this challenging task. The issues that we deal with in the Area of Separation and Areas of Limitation may have changed over time, but we have always been able to respond appropriately, keeping the best interests of both the inhabitants of the Golan Heights and UNDOF's mission in mind. Your interactions with the citizens, farmers, shepherds, soldiers and policemen on both sides are always done with the greatest amount of integrity and professionalism. It is this high-standard of performance and dependability of all members of UNDOF that continue to make this mission a success.*



*After several months in the mission I have a much better understanding of the workings of UNDOF and many of the issues that you have brought to my attention. I thank every one of you who has taken the time and effort to help me get up to speed on the mission. As I continue to learn about you, your responsibilities and your challenges, I know that we will find ways to improve the way we operate and conduct business.*

*Now fully into summer, the demands on people and equipment are high. I ask you to consider the objectives of a greener United Nations and to be aware of energy saving measures. Turn off computers and lights when not in use, and be conscious of the use of air conditioners when offices or quarters are empty. The high temperatures and demanding terrain will also challenge us in the execution of our duties, so I ask that you take care of your soldiers and yourselves, to remain an effective force throughout the summer months.*

*My initial impressions of UNDOF have been confirmed now that I have spent more time in the mission. We are a strong team, with excellent people, doing valuable and meaningful work. UNDOF's presence on the Golan Heights is making a real contribution to peace in the Middle East and you should all be proud of the part you play in this endeavor.*

*In the Service of Peace, to everyone in UNDOF, I say to you God bless you and thank you!*

Major General Natalio C. Ecarma III  
Force Commander UNDOF

## Chief of Staff Words

Time has quietly rushed by and summer is gradually creeping in as the landscape turns brown and yellow. In the recent months UNDOF has undergone a lot of transformation from the change of the Force Commander to the quiet but significant rotation of the contingents. With a new leader at the helm of affairs a new dynamism has been infused into the activities of UNDOF as there is a renewed focus to also engage the local population in order to better explain the nuances related to peace-keeping assignments and also to mitigate the problems of the local inhabitants. This small transformation, when viewed against the backdrop of routine operational activities, has provided UNDOF with a new dimension and greater challenges to contend with.

Also significant are the changes in the geo-political environment that have caught the imagination of all and sundry. This necessitates that we have to be alive and alert to all such events on the horizon and constantly evaluate their impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the force. For UNDOF to live up to its reputation of being one of the most successful missions of United Nations, it needs no reiteration that all of us collectively must endeavor to discharge our roles in the most befitting manner. Thus we need to view ourselves through the prism of collective responsibility so that each component of UNDOF knows how it is performing vis-a-vis the others. Merely sitting back and crystal gazing will be of little use if we do not



optimize and adapt to the changing environment. There are both positive and negative developments but we must seize the opportunity provided by the positive ones whilst attempting to mitigate the fall out of the negative ones. Concurrently we need to brace ourselves to overcome the tough times be it by trial and tribulation. Our aim and attempt should be to constantly bridge the trust deficit with and between both the parties to the agreement. This calls for repeated engagement at all levels and pragmatic approach to hindrances encountered therein.

We need to vigorously pursue our impartial and unbiased approach backed up by thorough professional conduct in a proactive manner and not sit back and let events overtake us. This definitely calls for an extra effort on our part so that preventive and precautionary actions preclude

small tactical level events escalating into unmanageable ones with implications at the operational and strategic level. Thus the onus singularly is on us to put our best foot forward in the best traditions of UNDOF.

The mobility and rapid response capability of the force needs to be optimized and also improved in times to come. Under the current force leadership there is no doubt that UNDOF will rise to meet all the challenges that come its way and fulfill its mandate efficiently and effectively.

Best Wishes,

Col Gurvir Singh Kahlon  
Chief of Staff UNDOF

# Visits to UNDOF

by Capt Muneyuki Yatsuo, DMPIO



*BGen Alain Parent, COS Canadian Expeditionary Forces Command, visited UNDOF HQ and the AOS (7<sup>th</sup> April 2010)*



*37 members of the Federal College for Security Studies, Germany, visited Camp Faouar and UNDOF Positions (19<sup>th</sup> May 2010)*



*United States Senator Mr. Robert Corker visited UNDOF HQ (31<sup>st</sup> May 2010)*

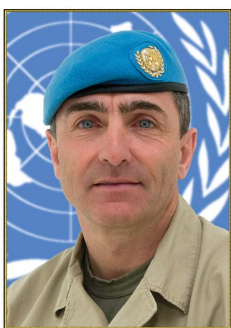


*Gen Edmund Entacher, Austrian Chief of Defense Staff, visited Camp Faouar and AUSBATT Positions (26<sup>th</sup>– 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010)*



*LtGen Slavko Baric, Deputy Chief of General Staff, Croatian Army, visited UNDOF HQ and AUSBATT (28<sup>th</sup> June – 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2010)*

- WgCdr John Steven Brewer, UK Defense Attaché, visited Camp Ziouani (9<sup>th</sup> April 2010)
- 16 members of the Japan Israel Friendship Organization, visited Camp Ziouani (17<sup>th</sup> April 2010)
- 23 members of the World Leaders Forum, United States, visited Camp Ziouani (6<sup>th</sup> May 2010)
- H.E. Mr. Bajja Nath Thapalia, Nepalese Ambassador, visited Camp Ziouani and OP 55 (26<sup>th</sup> May 2010)
- 27 members of the 18<sup>th</sup> Austrian General Staff Course, visited UNDOF HQ and UNDOF Positions (1<sup>st</sup> June 2010)
- Col Iain Campbell, UK Defense Attaché, and seven members of the UK embassy, visited Camp Faouar and the AOS (29<sup>th</sup> June 2010)



### The new COO

LtCol Volkmar Ertl was born on 24<sup>th</sup> Sep 1962 in Spittal, Austria.

He joined the Austrian Armed Forces in 1981 and graduated from the Austrian Military Academy in 1985. His twenty-five year active military career has been spent mostly in the field as a Commander and Staff Officer. He began as a Platoon Leader in an Engineer Battalion, followed by Company Commander and Battalion Staff Officer of 26<sup>th</sup> High Mountain Infantry Battalion and Deputy Battalion Commander of 25<sup>th</sup> Airmobile Infantry Battalion. His latest assignment was as G3 of 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade.

During his career, LtCol Ertl gained experience in missions abroad, both with UN and NATO. His latest appointment was in 2007-08 as Battalion Commander in Kosovo. He holds a Master's Degree in Defense and Security Management.

LtCol Ertl is married to Ursula and has two sons, Thomas and Clemens. He enjoys travelling and sports, preferably climbing and cycling.



### The new CO/HRVCON

LtCol Slavko Stojanović was born on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1959 in Slavonski Brod, Croatia.

He joined the Croatian Armed Forces in 1991 and served during the Homeland War.

He has served in the 160<sup>th</sup> Brigade as an Armored Mechanized Company Commander and upon promotion to his current rank served as Armored Mechanized Battalion Commander. After the Homeland War he was posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Military District as Chief of Branch, Armored Unit for the next four years.

In 1997 he attended the Military Command Staff School and graduated in 1998. He then served as Chief of Staff of the Logistic Brigade for three years, followed by the Chief of Operational and Planning Branch, G3 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps Croatian Armed Forces. Before UNDOF, he worked as Chief of S3 Section in Guard Armored Mechanized Brigade.

He is married to Blanka and they have five children - Ana (21), Mario (19), Matej (18), Josipa (16) and Juraj (14). His hobbies are sports, hunting and beekeeping.



### The new CO/PHILBATT

LtCol Alexis E. Gopico, Philippine Army, was born on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 1961 at Gen Luna, Surigao del Norte, Philippines.

He graduated from the Philippine Military Academy in 1986 and holds a Master of Arts Degree in Strategic Security Studies from the National Defense University, Washington DC, in 2007. He has undergone various military schoolings such as the Command and General Staff Course, Infantry Officer Advance Course and Special Forces Operations Course.

He held numerous Command and Staff positions including Commander Land Component, NCRCOM and Commander 8<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Battalion SFR (A), SOCOM, PA. His latest designation was Deputy Commander, AFP Joint Special Operations Group. In recognition of his twenty four years of service, LtCol Gopico was a recipient of the Distinguished Service Star, Bronze Cross Medal and 16 Military Merit Medals.

He is married to Maria Luisa and has two sons and a daughter. He enjoys playing badminton and basketball.



### The new COGG-D

LtCol John Hanlon was born on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1955 in Kilkenny, Ireland.

Having been conferred with a Degree in Civil Engineering from University College, Cork, he was commissioned into the Irish Defence Forces in 1978 assigned to the Corps of Engineers.

He has served in Combat Support (Field Engineer Company) and Combat Service Support (Maintenance Engineer Company) units. For the past ten years he was assigned as Special Staff Officer (Engineer) in HQ 1 Southern Brigade.

He has also served with UNIFIL as an Engineer Platoon Commander for six months in 1984-85 and for one year as Staff Officer Engineer Works 1988-89. In addition he led a military humanitarian relief group in Goma, Zaire (UNAMIR) in 1994 and was deployed as Democratization Officer with OSCE in Bosnia in 1997-98.

LtCol Hanlon is married to Valerie and they have four children - Lisa, Kyle, Laura and Lia. He enjoys golf and keeping fit.

# “Apple Crossing” – Assistance to the ICRC

This year the “Apple Crossing” took place for the fifth time. This annual event goes back to 2005 when the first apples were transported from the Druze villages on the Israeli Occupied Golan to the Syrian market. Only in 2008 was the Apple Crossing cancelled due to a poor harvest.



*Druze farmers from A-Side*

In terms of agriculture, the Golan is one of the richest areas in the entire region and owes its fertility to its rich volcanic soil. Due to overproduction, the Druze farmers on A-Side asked in 2004 whether they could sell part of their apple harvest in Syria - that's how the Apple Crossing started.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar 2010, three trucks from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), driven by Kenyan nationals, started loading tons of appetizing apples in front of Camp Ziouani on A-Side and transferred them to Syr-

ian trucks just past the B-Gate. This activity was of course, conducted with the permission of both countries and with the assistance of the ICRC. These delicious apples, the red Star King and the yellowish Golden Delicious, made their way to the different market places throughout Syria. Most of these apples came from the Druze villages of Majdal Shams and Masada of the Golan.

By the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, after almost



*Unloading apples in front of Camp Ziouani* per trip, and a total of 912 trips were made. From 2005 on, almost 32,000 tons of apples have been transferred through the UNDOF crossing point in Quneitra.

UNDOF for its part, made sure that the crossings went as scheduled between the gates without hampering the mandate of the organization.

The successful completion of the Apple Crossing illustrated UNDOF's support and interest in assisting the residents of the Golan.



*Enjoying the arrival of apples on B-Side*

eight weeks of labor, 8,053 tons of apples had crossed from the A-Side, through the Area of Separation (AOS) to Damascus with the support of the ICRC and UNDOF. For this year, there were a number of holidays during the working period which prolonged the length of the Apple Crossing. An average of 8,800 kilos of apples were delivered by the ICRC trucks

*Article by LtCol Cristobal Cosape, CLPIO  
Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer*



*ICRC trucks pass through C-Gate*



*ICRC staff from Syria*

## UNDOF Welfare Activities

On 15<sup>th</sup> Jun 2009 the Staff Officer Welfare position was re-established in UNDOF HQ. Since then Capt Ekkehard Gröppel has been carrying out projects and activities for the benefit of all members of UNDOF.



*Capt Gröppel (right) gives final instructions in Palmyra*

One of the more popular welfare activities is the one-day trip to various tourist sites in the mission area. More than 30 military and civilian UNDOF personnel and family members took part in the trip to Palmyra on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, and 45 joined the SO Welfare for a visit to the Krak des Chevaliers castle at the end of April. The costs for the participants were low in return for the rich and diverse experience available at these sites.

Sports events have also been organized, such as an international soccer tournament with players from sev-

eral nations (Austria, Croatia, India, Japan, Guatemala, Belgium and a local Syrian team from Khan Arnabeh) took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May. The Croatian team “Let It Be” won the soccer tournament versus the “Adidas” team from Khan Arnabeh. Basketball competitions have been taking place monthly with the

Filipino and Indian soldiers, as well as UNDOF civilian members taking part. In response to popular demand, an international tennis tournament is planned for September and a Go-Kart racing event will take place in the middle of August.

A large part of welfare’s responsibilities is the support of the Area of Separation marches and runs conducted by the contingents. More than 20 events will be supported in 2010 by the welfare budget in order to reduce entrance fees and encourage higher participation.



*UNDOF members in the Krak des Chevaliers*



*Palmyra*



Special projects like the purchase of welfare and sports equipment for the gymnasiums in Camps Ziouani and Faouar are also very important and demand a lot of SO Welfare's time. Nowhere else can you see soldiers from so many different nations training together as in the gyms used by members of UNDOF and UNTSO.

Last but not least the Friday "Happy Hours" are also an important part of coming together for all UNDOF members. In May, the Syr-

in the "Babylon Club" with typical Arabic music, food and beverages. Well known Karaoke events in the "Bayanihan Club" of the Filipinos, great Sushi and Sake days provided by the Japanese "Fuji House", or an amicable afternoon enjoying the typical Aus-



*Filipinos, Indians and UNDOF civilians play in mixed teams*

more, the Indians invite everyone to the "Taj Mahal" and once a year at the beginning of July, the Canadians celebrate their National Day in Camp Faouar.

Welfare activities are an important part for everybody deployed to a UN mission and have to be provided in a very positive and professional way. Open minded people will come together making sport, traveling to historic locations, and getting familiar with other cultures and nations to make all UNDOF welfare activities successful.

*Join SO Welfare for future activities!*

*Article by Capt Ekkehard Gröppel,  
SO Welfare  
Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer  
and Capt Ekkehard Gröppel*



*Soccer Cup 2010 finalists: "Let it be" vs. "Adidas"*

ian national staff became an inherent part of the weekly event schedule and they will continue to celebrate "Happy Hour" every five weeks

trian cheese-sausage (Käsekrainer) in the "Schweija Hut" are very popular and enable all of us to get more familiar with each other. Further-



*Let's train together - the Gym in Camp Faouar*



*Coming together for the "Happy Hour" in the "Schweija Hut"*

# The Whole AOS is Our AOR

**The Force HQ-Coy, consisting of three nations, was established in the year 2007 to carry out several tasks as Force Reserve of UNDOF. It is organized in one Austrian / Croatian Platoon, one Philippine Platoon and the HQ-Squad.**

The position of Company Commander is shared between Austria and the Philippines. Therefore, on the 9<sup>th</sup> Apr 2010, the handover-takeover ceremony was conducted under the presence of the Force Commander UNDOF in Camp Faouar. On the one hand the responsibility of the leadership is changing every year, but on the other hand four rotations of company members throughout the year are significant for the Force HQ-Coy and often challenging for all of our soldiers.

The following recollections of one soldier, who changed after six months of duty from an AUSBAT'T position to the Force HQ-Coy, describes the daily business in a perfect way: "Almost from day one, I experienced firsthand the differences to my former assignments in the AOS and also in Camp Faouar. In comparison to most other units here, our AOR is not limited to specific areas

within the AOS, but the whole AOS is our AOR, and we were constantly patrolling this area from north to south according to our orders. We also have our stand-by duties where we have to be ready for departure within a short period of time, in case of emergencies, which sometimes presents a bit of a challenge for our other plans and projects. Several times a week we leave the camp for our patrols to monitor the activities in the AOS and almost every



*FHQ-Coy ready for the Change of Command ceremony*



*Capt Fiedler (left) takes over command from Capt Ballena*





*Giving orders before setting off from Camp Faouar to the Area of Separation*

time we already counted the minutes after our return to the camp, where we then would again leave for our next patrol. Personally out of all the patrols I remember two in particular. One time some shepherd handed us a broken mine and another time we caught a bunch of mushroom pickers and shooed them back east of the A-line”.

A few months ago our whole operational system and intent was modified to reduce the number of patrols in order increase the amount of time we have available for other projects or trainings. Nevertheless we are still doing almost 300 patrols and an average of 4,500 km per month. This newly established “Force Reaction Group” with the strength of one platoon, has to ensure that it is ready to carry out tasks within 30 minutes notice to move from Camp Faouar. It does help to increase the number of soldiers constantly available on FC’s, COS’ or COO’s demand.

Continuous military training on a weekly basis and the accomplishment

of company-exercises on monthly basis are two prominent features to improve our necessary military skills.

Another issue of the Operational Format, “Command and Signal” has always been a key item to fulfill military tasks. Being a team of different nations needs close cooperation and interaction as a lack of understanding or communication could cause the failure of a mission. The same applies

to the daily life in our company. We are only able to perform well in UNDOF if all the participating soldiers, from three different nations, every day try their best to implement an earnest and open working atmosphere within Force HQ-Coy.

*Article by Capt Helmut Fiedler,  
FHQ-Coy Cdr*

*Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer  
and SSgt Thomas Eichelsberger*



*FHQ-Coy on patrol in the Area of Separation*

# We Build and Maintain

**The Engineer Section provides construction services and infrastructure maintenance for all UNDOF Positions as well as power generation, power distribution and fire services.**

The Engineer Section has 32 persons which include three international staff, ten military staff and 19 local civilians to handle a myriad of tasks ranging from the glamorous such as constructing new buildings to the mundane such as fixing door locks. While it's the construction projects that are the most visible of our activities it's the routine tasks that our customers, the soldiers in the field, are most interested in, as without the provision of basic services their life can be very uncomfortable. As you can imagine problems like blocked toilets and heating system breakdowns must be dealt with urgently.

Fortunately for dealing with first line maintenance problems in the

battalion camp areas and positions we have the support of the Battalion Engineer units to provide basic engineer services. We do however spend

a lot of time co-coordinating with the Battalion Engineer units to support their material requirements and to develop longer term construction plans requiring input into the annual UNDOF budget. Providing construction material is not as simple as you might think as we often have to struggle through different terminol-

ogies and language issues to provide a clear description of the material required so that vendors can bid on items through the UN procurement process. It's critical that we provide our Battalion Engineers with the material they need as they can only be effective if they get the material support our office provides.

The most important service to the operation of the mission is from the Electrical and

Generator Units within the Engineer Section. Without power we would have no communications and of course power is essential to our working and living facilities. We are fortunate to have one of the most reliable and developed power generation and backup systems in any UN mission. All of the positions which



*Mr. Ian Murray (center) and Maj Erwin Klem with the personnel of the Engineer Section*



rely only on generator power have an automatic transfer panel which ensures power quickly comes back on in the rare event of a breakdown. In Camp Faouar the synchronization panels and voltage sensors ensure we quickly move to generated power when there are problems on the local grid which frequently occurs during storms and high electrical loads. The internet monitoring of generators is being developed which will further increase the reliability of our generated power. As the head of the Generator Unit, Mr. Leif Haaland is retiring this year after many years in UNDOF, it is appropriate to note he has been the major force in bringing our generator systems to a high standard having replaced or upgraded all of the mission generators during his time in the mission.

In the design and construction areas we have recently completed

two major projects in Camp Faouar, one being the new Austrian Battalion Engineer Workshop/Stores building and also a new workshop for transport to support the planned move of the Transport Workshop in Damascus to Camp Faouar. In the AOS positions we are continuing our program to replace older prefabricated buildings with constructed masonry buildings and work will start in Position 32 this summer to replace the current accommodation building.

One of the new challenges for the Engineer Section will be supporting the new UN Environment policy and looking for ways to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions. Last year was the first time the UN completed a mission by mission calculation of greenhouse gases emitted. So in the upcoming year we will connect more positions to the

local power grid to reduce generator usage and we have planned several solar heating projects. Also new air conditioners must use the new generation freon types that are less damaging to the environment. Of course this is not just an Engineer issue and will require all UNDOF members to think about their role in our environment and to remember to turn off those air-conditioners and lights when they are not required.

Article by Ian Murray,  
Chief Engineer

Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer



Mr. Leif Haaland - retiring after 25 years in UNDOF



Position 32 will be rebuilt



## “Barreling Project” by the Geographic Information Section (GIS)

The “Barreling Project” of the A-line started roughly in May 2009 under the leadership of former FC UNDOF, MGen Wolfgang Jilke, with the GIS and EOD teams. The aim of the project is to more clearly identify the A-line.

These barrels act as a point of reference for UNDOF troops, shepherds and Syrian civilians. The main issues to be addressed by the project were that some barrels were not located on the A-line and that some areas had a lack of points of orientation. In general, the rule is to be able to see from one barrel the two next barrels on the right and left side, but the placement of the barrel is very dependent on the terrain.

The first step was to move the current barrels on to the A-line, as 23 barrels were west or east of it. Six barrels were totally removed as they were not needed any more. 54 barrels had to be newly built to fill the gaps.



*Ms. Beatrice Puyo, GIS Officer, and Maj Managula, Mapping Officer*

The role of GIS unit in this project is central and consists of several phases:

- › Identify the areas where barrels are missing or need to be moved and propose a new location.
- › Check in the field with EOD teams if the barrel can be placed at this location depending on the terrain and mine-fields, and if convenient UNDOF informs IDF and SSAD.
- › GIS and EOD mark the location, EOD team erects the barrel and GIS checks the location again and updates the database in order to revise the maps.



*Identifying the exact location of the barrel*



*Field work by the former Mapping Officer, Maj Göttlich*

GIS is using a GPS with an accuracy of three meters, but has just purchased a high quality GPS to make measurements within centimeters in the future like UNIFIL is using to mark their Blue Line. Accuracy and details are essential in such a project.

However, the precise location of the A- and B-lines is subject to minor location discrepancies between the barrels and the outline of the actual line in the Agreement on Disengagement map is at 1:100,000 scale. Such discrepancies discovered with recent GPS measurements are being considered but they may not prevent the operational use of the recent products of 1:50,000 scale maps at both printing and/or visualization scales.



*The "Golden Barrel (GOB)" has been successfully set*

#### **Following this Barreling Project, some challenges and issues came up:**

- › Moving a few barrels to the A-line created in some locations new field violations. Consequently, some negotiations are still open with IDF and SSAD to get permits for the farmers.

- › It had to be explained and clarified to both host nations why UNDOF wanted to move or build barrels as during 35 years, nothing changed. Barrels were moved from 5 to 255 meters because they were not located on the right spot at the beginning, now techniques evolved and we can be more accurate.

- › In some areas the terrain is a real challenge as the slope is very steep. Thus, it is not always possible to erect the barrel exactly on the A-line.

- › As the number of barrels significantly increased, the system of naming needed to be changed. Starting by the north area, the first barrel will be ALB, then from Z to E barrels in the south plus one digit, finishing at the GOB barrel. Q and J were avoided to not be mixed with I and O. Currently, all barrels are repainted with the new names.

Approximately 13 barrels on A-line still need to be built but the locations have already been identified. At the end of the project, a final document will be handed over to both nations including the photo of each barrel, the location, and the date it was built. This document will be used as a reference and an understanding between UNDOF and the host nations.

Completing the Barreling Project of the A-line will take a few more months. This project is based principally on real team work between GIS, UNDOF Operations Branch,



*PHILBATT Engineers setting one of the E-barrels*

and the line battalions with their respective EOD teams.

*Article by Ms. Beatrice Puyo,  
GIS Officer*

*Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer,  
Maj Stefan Oman and PHILBATT*

# The Journey is the Destination

**From 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May, over one hundred marchers of all ranks and nationalities participated in the AUSBATT March, making their way from Position 27 to reach the long desired destination at Position Hermon Hotel.**

The Area of Separation Marches take place in order to maintain the physical readiness of soldiers for duty. For this reason, the Austrian Battalion organises the so-called “AUSBATT March” twice a year. The aim of this march is to reach the target - the highest permanently manned UN position based 2814 meters above sea level. In this case the focus does not lie on marching time, but on the actual reaching of this position.



Over two days a total distance of 45 kilometers, as well as an altitude difference of approx. 1900 meters has to be mastered. Together with extreme temperatures, at times rough terrain as well as the sheer weight of the military equipment, the AUSBATT march is a very special experience



rience, which none of the participants who reached their destination would like to miss.

On the first marching day one starts in Quneitra, marches along the Grazing area, and struggles up a foot patrol path in order to reach the destination at Position 10 after 21 kilometers.

On the next day the remaining 24 kilometers and 1500 meters elevation difference have to be mastered. Once the East Ridge is reached after several marching hours, everyone is overwhelmed by the panorama of Mount Hermon. This feeling of elation is sometimes surpassed by surprise when one notices how much marching still needs to be done. The Position Hermon Hotel appears to be almost unreachable. For one or the other this destination will remain unreachable indeed. The greater the joy is for those who cross the finish line at the long-desired destination.

Not to be unmentioned are the hard working “leprechauns” who, over days and weeks, plan and organise this march.



ing from the Operations Branch and companies who, with a lot of passion operate the charging stations. They deserve special thanks and congratulations to all participants of the AUSBATT march for their efforts.

*Article by Capt Günther Voitic,  
Press Officer  
Photos by MSgt Martin Austerhuber*



## The First PHILBATT Change of Command

The first Philippine Battalion in UNDOF officially ended its tour of duty on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2010. LtCol Milfredo Melegrito handed over the duties and responsibilities to his classmate LtCol Alexis Gopico, both members of Philippine Military Academy Class 1986.

The turn-over ceremony was attended by FC UNDOF, MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III, Philippine Ambassador to Israel, H.E. Petronila Garcia, guests from the Filipino community in Israel, equally respected contingents of UNDOF,



*LtCol Melegrito hands over to LtCol Gopico (left)*

and local and international staff.

LtCol Melegrito expressed deep gratitude for the support extended to him by the two host nations, Syria

and Israel, UNDOF leadership and members of the battalion for successfully implementing the UNDOF mandate over the last six months.

In his speech, LtCol Gopico assured to continue to strive even harder in pursuit of the good deeds started by his predecessor with the utmost degree of discipline and professionalism.

The event ended with a traditional olive tree planting ceremony at the Camp Ziouani parade square followed by a reception.

## Philippine Independence Day Celebration

On 12<sup>th</sup> Jun 1898, Philippine revolutionary forces proclaimed the independence of the Philippine Islands after almost three centuries of colonial rule by Spain. However, this was not recognized by Spain and the United States resulting in a war between Philippines and the United States. On 4<sup>th</sup> Jul 1946 the Philippines finally achieved its independence by the Treaty of Manila. Former President Diosdado Macapagal designated June 12 as the country's Independence Day.

On 17<sup>th</sup> Jun 2010, in commemoration of its 112<sup>th</sup> Independence Day,

PHILBATT celebrated in the presence of FC UNDOF, MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III together with the Philippine Ambassador to Israel, UNDOF members and members of the Federation of Filipino Community.

LtCol Alexis Gopico, CO PHILBATT welcomed the guests, and a colorful cultural presentation and the awarding of prizes of the PHILBATT Sportsfest were among the highlights of the program. MGen Ecarma in his speech, reminisced on the exploits and gallantry of Filipinos who struggled for independence and



*Cultural performances*

the sacrifices of Philippine peacekeepers and their contribution to maintaining peace around the world.

An array of different Filipino dishes were prepared and served for everyone to enjoy during the lunch that capped the Philippine Independence Day celebration in the Golan Heights.

*Article by Maj Ricardo Ellorda,  
Press Officer  
Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer*



## “An Army Marches on its Stomach”

The supply of food and other essential goods and services is very important for the success of any military operation. This is one of the roles of LOGBATT in UNDOF.



*LtCol Sanjeev Singh (center) and the Supply Platoon*

LOGBATT consists of INDCON and J-CON. J-CON manages the Transport Platoon whereas Supply, Maintenance, Engineer and Signal Platoons are managed by INDCON. Unlike the operational battalions, LOGBATT works behind the scene and plays a very important role in supporting them. In this article we want to introduce two of the platoons.

The Supply Platoon is comprised of one officer, four WOs and 18 soldiers and is responsible for carrying out second line supply to the force in UNDOF. Their main task

is to receive and issue rations to the entire force and run the Regional Warehouse and POL (Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants) station in Camp Ziouani (CZ).

UNDOF receives dry containers twice and a frozen container once a month. The dry containers are received at Camp Faouar and then brought to the ration depot at CZ which involves crossloading to UNDOF trucks, preparation of crossing lists, checking quantity as per invoice and storage life, preparing discrepancy lists and stacking them by code. The frozen container is received at CZ and items

are unloaded directly into freezers. The freezers are monitored to ensure maintenance of required temperature at all times. Apart from this, the platoon is continuously engaged in carrying out the palletisation of both dry and frozen rations for weekly issue to the contingents. This work continues on holidays and outside regular working hours to ensure timely and correct issue to the contingents. On

average, the Supply Platoon handles 40 tons of dry rations and 20 tons of frozen rations per month consisting of an inventory of approx. 450 items. The warehouse in CZ handles a huge inventory of cleaning material, batteries, clothing, UN accoutrements, glassware, kitchen items, tools, stationary etc.

The POL station meets all the requirements of POL for the vehicles and equipment held on A-Side.

The Supply Platoon has been functioning very smoothly and effectively to ensure consumer satisfaction and contributing towards keeping the high morale of UNDOF troops.



*Supply Platoon at work*



*Maintenance Platoon commanded by Maj Chaitanya Capoor (center)*

ments, 19 generator sets, 225 binoculars and night vision devices, 23 electronic/electric medical equipments, 192 small arms and recovery services to A-Side.

The Critical Detachment of this platoon, located on B-Side, is wholly responsible for the 21 Armored Patrolling Vehicles of UNDOF which includes M-113, RG-32M and SISU. With technical expertise and occasional guidance from

The Maintenance Platoon is responsible for providing first line and limited second line repair, maintenance and recovery services to all UNDOF vehicles and equipment. Having taken over the baton from the Canadian Contingent in Jan 2006 the Indian Army personnel from the Elite Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers have provided

unrelenting, dedicated and professional maintenance services for UNDOF. Transcending all impediments of a large fleet of vehicles and equipment of many makes and types, the “Golan Eagles” have lived up to the challenges and have constantly endeavored to improve



*Maintenance of the RG-32M*

themselves and the services they provide. The large workload, handled by one officer, five WOs and 23 soldiers, includes 152 vehicles, 699 refrigeration equipments, 660 electrical equip-

Partia Workshop in UNIFIL, this detachment is the last bastion of maintenance support for these vehicles in UNDOF. They have given an excellent account of themselves in their concerted effort to keep these critical vehicles on the road.

*Article by LtCol Sanjeev Singh, SupO, and Maj Chaitanya Capoor, MaintO  
Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer*



*The Critical Detachment team in Camp Faouar*



*Maintenance Platoon working on various UNDOF and contingent-owned equipment*

# VIP Visits to J-CON

**J-CON was not only busy with its routine tasks but also with a high level of visits from Japan during recent months – but it was a great honor for us.**

Japan's Deputy Defense Minister, H.E. Mr. Akihisa Nagashima and delegation visited UNDOF on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

The visit started at Parade Square in Camp Faouar with a Guard of Honor followed by briefings about UNDOF and J-CON activities. At the meeting with FC UNDOF Mr. Nagashima assured that Japan will continue its contribution to UN missions and the FC expressed his appreciation of J-CON's performance. In the afternoon the delegation visited OP 72 for a briefing on the AOS and OGG activities. The next day they moved to Camp Ziouani (CZ), and concluded their two day visit by addressing the Japanese soldiers. Mr. Nagashima and the delegation stated that they were very satisfied with the work of J-CON and enjoyed their visit.

From 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May Japan's Vice Commanding General of 8<sup>th</sup> Division, MGen Takamasa Ariyoshi visited UNDOF.

After a Guard of Honor MGen Ariyoshi was briefed by COO UNDOF and met the COS. They talked about J-CON activities and he was very pleased to hear about the excellent performance of J-CON's soldiers. During an AOS tour and briefings at each position he also observed J-CON patrol track maintenance works at E1A patrol path. They also travelled to CZ, met with CO LOGBATT and visited the AOL and OGG OPs. MGen Ariyoshi returned to Japan deeply impressed with the achievements of J-CON.

LtGen Toshinobu Miyajima, Commanding General of the Central Readiness Force and responsible for all Japanese UN missions abroad, visited UNDOF from 28<sup>th</sup> June to 1<sup>st</sup> July.

After the Guard of Honor and a wreath laying ceremony he met with the FC and toured the AOS. It helped LtGen Miyajima to understand UNDOF's operations in detail and to see the changes since his previous visits. He also met all the National Contingent Commanders and was satisfied to hear that Japanese soldiers are doing a good job.

After CZ he visited the AOL and UNTSO OPs and left on 1<sup>st</sup> July with great satisfaction after his visit to UNDOF and J-CON.

These big visits were really encouraging for the J-CON soldiers, and will surely encourage them to work much harder for the rest of their time in UNDOF.

*Article by Capt Shunsuke Nohira,  
Press Officer  
Photos by SSgt Dai Nishimura*



*H.E. Mr. Akihisa Nagashima*



*MGen Takamasa Ariyoshi*



*LtGen Toshinobu Miyajima*





# Celebrations in the Croatian Contingent

**After six months in UNDOF, HRVCON celebrated its Change of Command on the 14<sup>th</sup> Jun 2010 in Camp Faouar. The fourth Croatian Contingent Commander, Maj Marijan Madjerić handed over to his successor, LtCol Slavko Stojanović.**



*Croatian and Austrian troops assembled for the parade*

Many distinguished guests took part in the ceremony including the Force Commander, MGen Natalio C. Ecarma III, the Ambassador of Croatia to Egypt, Mr. Markota, the Honorary Consul in Syria, Mr. Khouchaba Nissan, the Ambassador of Austria, Mrs. Maria Kunz

and many others who honored us by being present at the ceremony.

The mixed platoon of Croatian and Austrian soldiers was reviewed by the FC with the sound of Croatian historical marches.

After the Croatian and Austrian national anthems the outgoing commander gave his farewell speech in which he highlighted the very good cooperation among all nations and the support he received.

The Croatian colors were handed over from Maj Madjerić

to LtCol Stojanović as a symbol of Croatian loyalty to the UNDOF mission, after which they signed the handover document. In his inauguration speech LtCol Stojanović stated how proud he is to take over the duty of NCC and DCO/AUSBATT and to help other nations and countries.



*Maj Madjerić with LtCol Stojanović (left)*

**After only 25 days in the mission area the Croatians had a good reason to celebrate - the National Day was celebrated on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June.**

This was a great opportunity for the Croatian Contingent and their NCC, LtCol Slavko Stojanović, to invite UNDOF members for this memorable event. On the 25<sup>th</sup> Jun 2001 the Croatian parliament adopted the Declaration on the Proclamation of the Sovereign and Independent Republic of Croatia. It was a historic day for the Croatian people

who have been fighting for freedom and independence since the middle ages. This is why on this occasion it is important to voice gratitude to all those who took part in the reconstruction of the independent Croatian state and in any way contributed to its development. It was also time to remember that this is the second year that Croatia is marking their National Day as a full member of NATO.

“The participation of Croatian soldiers and police in 18 peace missions across the world indicates that in that sense the international community has faith in us and is counting on us”, highlighted LtCol Stojanović in his speech. Afterwards a presentation about Croatian people, culture,

history, and other interesting facts was given.

After this presentation, the official part of the ceremony ended to give place to Croatian music, cakes and good food.



*Croatian presentation to FC UNDOF*



*Advertising beautiful Croatia*

*Article by WO II Lenka Buće,  
Admin & Signals NCO  
Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer  
and Sgt Wolfgang Bauer*

# Let the Evidence Talk – MP Traffic Accident Investigation

**One of most frequent tasks of the UNDOF Military Police is to respond to a traffic accident. Whenever an UNDOF or UNTSO/OGG member is involved in a traffic accident, MPs are ready to provide support and to conduct an on scene investigation around the clock.**



*MPs secure the accident scene and search for traces of evidence*

UNDOF peacekeepers and UNTSO/OGG observers are required to drive thousands of kilometers in the conduct of their duties. Despite all means of cautiousness sometimes it is impossible to completely avoid traffic accidents. When it happens there is always a MP patrol ready to respond and to handle the situation on the scene.

Especially when local civilians are involved it is important to get a clear vision of the course of an acci-

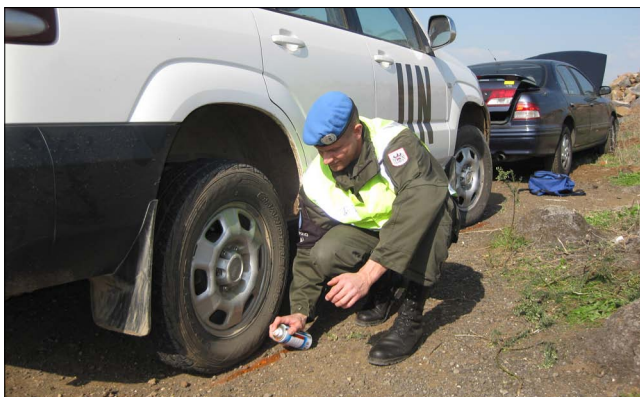
dent. Since most of the local civilians do not speak English it is necessary to use a translator, which is usually one of the Liaison Officers, for taking statements about the accident. Another fact that complicates MP investigations is the error-proneness of the human perception that leads to sometimes differing opinions among the involved parties as to how the accident occurred.

If that is the case the MP investigation depends on the evidence

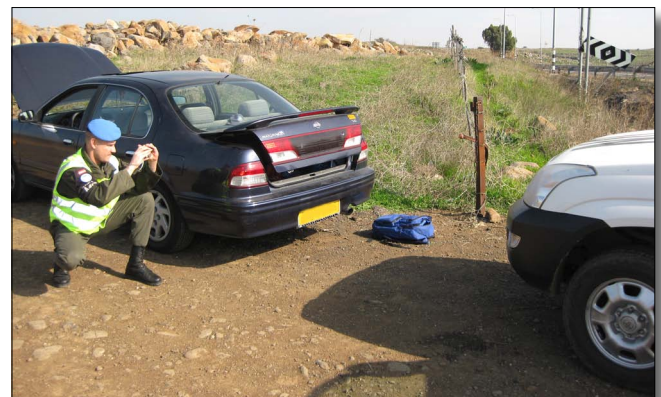
found on the accident scene and there is a lot of it if you know where to look. Traces may be transferred from vehicle to vehicle, victim to vehicle, vehicle to road or vice versa. Traces like skid marks and their length, broken glass, fuel, paint, microfibers, skin, blood or light and indicator bulbs may be evidence to support or contradict a story told by any of the involved parties.

In order to do a proper job it is crucial for the MP to have a genuine accident scene to collect required evidence. And that requires the UNDOF or UNTSO/OGG member involved in an accident to call immediately for assistance, to stay on the spot and not to move the involved vehicles. Only then can the MP listen to the story the evidence is telling with the intent to serve our comrades in the mission.

*Article by Maj Günther Kreiml,  
Force Provost Marshal  
Photos by UNDOF MP*



*Patrolman marking the final position of the vehicle*



*MP taking pictures of the involved vehicles*

# The Induction Training of New UNMOs

**Most UNMOs within UNTSO are deployed to one of Observer Group Golan (OGG) or Observer Group Lebanon (OGL). The UNMOs deployed to OGG will be further divided into either OGG-T on the A-Side based in Tiberias or OGG-D on the B-Side based in Damascus.**

All military observers selected from 23 contributing nations receive training in their home countries before arriving in the mission. They conduct two phases of induction training before deploying to their first OP as well as “on the job training” during the next four to six weeks on duty.

The first phase is four days of collective training at UNTSO HQ in Jerusalem to ensure all UNMOs are properly oriented for their mission. During this phase they receive various lectures on topics such as security in the field, the UN finance system, fire safety, first aid and road safety. These lessons are general in nature because of the different methods of operation in the various outstations.

The second phase of induction is conducted at the outstation that the individual UNMO will be posted to which includes orientation to the area and lectures explaining the outstation’s operating and administration procedures. A very important part is the initial training from UNDOF as they will be operating under UNDOF Operational Control on a day to day basis. The training includes practical exercises on fire fighting, mine awareness and briefs on the UNDOF reporting system. Also, FC UNDOF personally welcomes the UNMOs to the “one mis-



*New UNMOs at UNTSO HQ*



*Practicing for the CC2 on OP 56*



*Area familiarization of PHILBATT AOR*

sion - one team - one goal” philosophy of UNDOF and outlines his expectations.

After their first week on the OP, the UNMOs will be expected to have a good understanding of the SOPs and how to identify the equipment and insignia of both forces and will be required to sit a test called the “Chief’s Challenge 1” (CC1) when they complete their first OP tour.

UNMOs will be classified as “juniors” until they pass their “Chief’s Challenge 2” (CC2) test during their third OP tour. The “senior” will show him or her the AOR and provide guidance on various hypothetical scenarios. The CC2 test consists of knowledge of the OP and its safety and security features, a full operational brief from the observation platform and procedures on evacuation and responses to various potential scenarios.

After successfully concluding the CC2 test there is continuation training to ensure the UNMOs retain the knowledge and also joint training with UNDOF including line tours through PHILBATT and AUS-BATT Areas of Responsibility.

Finally, the newly qualified seniors are now responsible to train the next incoming juniors.

*Article by Capt Richard Buchan,  
Press Officer  
Photos by UNTSO and UNDOF*

