

GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



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No. 119

Dear Reader !

I proudly present the new edition of the Golan Journal with our focus on the 35th anniversary of the Mission of UNDOF in the Golan. With all its efforts the editorial team again can provide you - the worshiped reader - with a magazine full of insights into the mission of UNDOF. For these efforts I would like to thank all the contingent Press Officers for their contribution. Sadly, we must also say good bye to our outgoing comrades Maj Hanne Olafsen, Maj Piotr Wladzimiruk, Capt Vishal Vikram Singh, Capt Martin Malinowski, Capt Mariusz Grzanka and WO III Slaven Matuza. At the same time I would like to warmly welcome their successors Capt Kellie Robinson, Maj Rajendra, LtCol Kartik Kumar Singh, Capt Rüdiger Von Gimborn, Capt Agnieszka Strzemiecka and Lt I Jelena Srakić in our dedicated set of Press Officers.

In this edition it gives me great pleasure to present articles about the honorable visit of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Mr. Alain Le Roy, Ambassadors and Military Attachés to UNDOF, some humanitarian activities of UNDOF peacekeepers and the celebration of 35 years of UNDOF.



Our team: Alexander, Taka, Günther and Gerry

Dip in and find out!

Yours sincerely,
Capt Günther Kreiml, SOPR

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Front (Page 1): 35 Years of UNDOF - the colours marching out
Photo by WO II Gernot Payer, Force Photographer

Back (Page 24): 35 Years of UNDOF - photos of the celebration
Photos by WO II Gernot Payer, Force Photographer

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

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Force Commander's Message

Dear Fellow Peacekeepers!

The summer is finally upon us and the local weatherman is now bored as he already knows how the next days are going to be, sunny and hot! The spring is always a busy time, and also a time for change. We had a multitude of very important and high profile events intertwined with the completion of all the AOS marches and the rotation of three of our contingents. If this was not enough, we are also getting ready to change our structure to enable us to be more efficient and have an even greater presence on the ground. Through all this, you have all performed exceptionally well!

First, we had the visit of the Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Alain Le Roy, who is responsible for all the Peacekeeping missions in the world. Thanks to all your efforts, he was able to get a greater understanding of our mission, our challenges and our accomplishments. He was extremely impressed to see the immense impact we have to the region compared to the size and cost of our mission.

We also hosted two major events, the 35th anniversary celebration and the A-Side Ambassador and Defence Attaché day. The turnout for both of these events was extraordinary as for the anniversary, 20 Ambassadors/representatives and 13 DAs attended, and for the information day the numbers were even greater with 25 and 15 respectively. This truly shows the interest and support that the diplomatic community has in the important work of UNDOF.

As part of this work, I want to recognize the consolidated operational impact of both line battalions. Through your tremendous efforts, we continue to see a much historically reduced number of A-Line crossing violations. Education and presence are still your two best tools. I also wanted to mention the Task Force project one more time. I know we have been discussing this for a long time, but we are now at the final crossroads as it is time for implementation. The efficiency of the TF will be directly dependant of the cooperation of our logistical elements and the integration with our civilian staff, International and National, whose essential work behind the scene is often forgotten even though it is the backbone of our operations. I ask for your patience and your confidence as this is an essential pain to go through in order to improve and grow as a Force.

Finally, I would like to take a moment to welcome all the new members of UNDOF in the Austrian, Croatian and Indian contingents. You are now part of a great tradition of Peacekeeping in the Middle-East. I wish you a safe and fulfilling deployment.

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

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



Major General Wolfgang JILKE
Force Commander UNDOF

Chief of Staff Words

Fellow Peacekeepers!

As we continue with celebrations of UNDOF's 35th anniversary, it's opportune to pay our tribute to all past members of the Force, notably the ones that have made the supreme sacrifice of their lives, towards the cause of peace in the region. From the frugal beginning 35 years back, when a few soldiers were picked up from UNEF II in Sinai for deployment as a "Disengagement Force" between the IDF and the SAAF on the Golan Heights, it has been a fascinating journey for the Force. It has taken the vision and leadership of Force Commanders past and present and blood, toil and sweat of soldiers from varying nationalities, to produce this vibrant and dynamic entity that is small but mobile and adaptable and one, that enjoys the respect of all involved parties in the region.

The journey has not been smooth all through. There have been testing times. However, the Force has seen through all that to shape up a 'Mission' that is perhaps the most successful of all the United Nations' Missions anywhere. Therefore, we all can justifiably be proud of where we are and what we have achieved.

However, this is also a time for a new resolve; that, whatever may be the circumstances; we will always be conscious of this legacy and do our utmost to uphold it.

For, we are living through some of the most interesting times in the region. There is undoubtedly a sense of anticipation in the region that perhaps somehow, this time around, issues will get resolved and finally



there will be a comprehensive peace in the region. Yet, to the cynics, the issues are so intractable and indicators so negative, that situation is only likely to worsen.

So, do we just sit back and react to emerging situations or can we contribute towards shaping the environment to a desired one? In my view, we have enormous responsibilities in this regard. Because of our professional and impartial conduct, we have the trust and confidence of both parties. Our foremost responsibility is that we do everything to maintain that trust. That entails being proactive in performance of our tasks and reacting with requisite maturity and sensitivity to apprehensions of the parties.

To be able to do that, we will need to put in extra effort to prevent any friction between the parties because as we understand, in this region, even small tactical inci-

dents can quickly conflagrate into ones with strategic implications. This effort will have to in the form of finding additional work force for operational tasks, establishing new positions, equipping ourselves with suitably and a robust liaison effort.

Under the current Force leadership, steps are already underway in that direction. Therefore, I am sanguine that whatever be the circumstances, UNDOF will be up to the challenge.

Best wishes,

Col Ganesh Singh Bisht
Chief of Staff UNDOF

Visits to UNDOF by Capt Takahisa Moriya, DMPIO



Ms. Judy Hylton, Political Affairs Officer, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), visited Camp Faouar (12th - 15th Apr 2009)



Mr. Robert Serry, United Nations Special Coordinator (UNSCO), visited UNDOF Positions (16th Apr 2009)



LtGen Kersten Lahl, President of the Federal College for Security Studies, Berlin, and 33 participants of Course on Security Policy visited Camp Ziouani (12th May 2009)



Mr. Bogdan Klich, Minister of National Defense, Poland, supervised POLBATT and evaluated its performance of mandated tasks (1st Jun 2009)



On invitation of the Force Commander, 25 Ambassadors and 15 Military Attaches visited Camp Ziouani to present a very special tour of the UNDOF Operations (12th Jun 2009)

- Ms. Hawaa El-Tayeb, Liaison and Policy Officer, United Nations New York, visited Camp Faouar (30th Apr 2009)
- Mr. Yasutoshi Nishimura, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Japan, visited A- and B-Side of UNDOF (3rd May 2009)
- Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General (USG), Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), supervised UNDOF performance of mandated tasks (7th - 10th May 2009)
- MGen Nobuyuki Ichida, Commanding General of 5th Brigade, Japan Ground Self Defense Forces (JGSDF), visited A- and B-side of UNDOF (11th - 14th May 2009)
- BGen Vasant Kanitkar Rajeev, National Defense Course, India, visited Camp Ziouani (15th May 2009)
- Mr. Moshe Alexenberg, Assistant Academic Director Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzliya, and 39 students of this school visited Camp Ziouani (18th May 2009)
- BGen Alan Geder, Commanding General of Slovenian Armed Forces, visited Camp Ziouani (20th - 21st May 2009)
- Mr. Thomas Oertle, Deputy Head of Mission, Switzerland, visited UNDOF Positions (21st May 2009)

New People in UNDOF



The new CO/LOGBATT

Lt Col Amit Ashri was born on 27th Nov 1969. After completing training at the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, he was commissioned into 169 Field Regiment (OP Hill). He obtained a Bachelor of Arts from Punjab University, Chandigarh and Master of Science in Weapon Systems and Technology from Poona University. He has undergone the Artillery Young Officer course, the Advance Gunnery Course and the Regimental Survey Officer Course. He has also successfully completed the Long Gunnery Staff Course and is a qualified instructor in gunnery. Lt Col Amit Ashri is a paratrooper and has served with the elite heliborne and airborne specialist units. He has completed the Special Guerilla Warfare and Advance Mountain Climbing Courses. Lt Col Amit Ashri has served as a Tp Ldr, Gun Position Officer, Observation Post officer, Battery Commander, Adjutant and Second in Command at different operational and peace areas while with 169 Field Regt (OP Hill). In addition to the numerous regimental appointments, Lt Col Amit Ashri has served as a General Staff Officer-Grade One (Operations) in a formation employed for counter terrorism tasks.

Lt Col Amit Ashri is married to Reena Ashri and they are blessed with a twelve years old son Akshun Ashri.



The new CO/POLBATT

LtCol Mariusz Jurek was born on 07th Feb 1959 in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki. He graduated from School of Air Forces in Dęblin in 1982. After becoming an officer he was filling many posts from platoon and squadron leader through Commanding Officer of Regiment, staff posts in the Command of the Air Forces and the General Staff of the Polish Army. Further LtCol Jurek was Deputy Chief of the Planning Center in the Operational Command of the Polish Army where he gained experience in various staff functions. During his military carrier he served as a Military Observer on the Balkans and Georgia. He has completed many courses in the General Staff Academy and the National Defense Academy in Warsaw. He completed a Military Observer Course in

Turkey and a Staff Officers Course in Germany.

LtCol Mariusz Jurek is married and has a daughter.



The new DCO/AUSBATT

LtCol Antun Šaf was born on 15th Oct 1971 in Slavonski Brod, Croatia. He joined the Croatian Armed Forces in 1991 and served during the "Homeland War". After graduation he served in the 3rd Infantry Battalion of the 3rd Guard Brigade where he remained for 18 years making his career from rifleman to squad leader, platoon leader, Coy DCO, Coy CO, Brigade staff officer and Battalion DCO. At the moment he is the Battalion CO of the 1st Mechanized Battalion "Falcons" of the Guard Armored Mechanized Brigade. LtCol Šaf graduated on Basic and High Officers School "Petar Zrinski" and Command Staff School "General Blago Zadro" and has a degree of the Faculty of Traffic Engineering.

He is married to his wife Dijana and has two children, Bora (12) and Donna (16). His hobbies are boxing and motorcycling.

Women power in UNDOF Part II

On the occasion of the International Women's Day and the International Day of UN Peacekeepers with this year's topic "Women in UN Peacekeeping" on 8th Mar and 29th May 2009 we will have a closer look at the efforts women make in the mission of UNDOF.

UN peacekeeping has been developed to help countries torn by conflict create conditions for lasting peace since the first mission was established in May 1948. There have been a total of 63 UN peacekeeping operations since then. By resolution 57/129 of 11th Dec 2002, the General Assembly designated 29th May as the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, to pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations. The UN had chosen for this year's topic on this occasion "Women in UN Peacekeeping".

Continuing from the article in the last Golan Journal, we introduce a few more female peacekeepers in UNDOF to you.

Poland



In the Medical Center of Camp Ziouani there is one female dental team taking care of the UN members' teeth: dentist Ms. Iwona Chmielowska and the x-ray technician Ms. Marlena Marcinkowska. While for Marlena this is the exciting first time in UNDOF, for Iwona it is already her eighth tour. She has also served in Lebanon, Kosovo and Bosnia. Both like to do sports in their leisure time and enjoy the Golan Heights.

Together with the Senior Medical Officer Dr. Jadwiga Kluszczyńska two nurses, Ms. Monika Nowak and Ms. Bernadeta Woś, serve as experienced professionals in the Polish Medical Center. They treat UNDOF peacekeepers and local civilians in case of emergency. Jadwiga and Monika usually work in civil environment in Poland but they enjoy the new experience of working in a multinational mission like UNDOF. Bernadeta works in the 2nd Army Field Hospital in Poland and already has been deployed to Iraq participating in many emergency situations with wounded soldiers.



Capt Aleksandra Boron is one of the four Duty Officers of UNDOF HQ in the Joint Operations Center. During her 24 hour shifts, her duty is to coordinate and report operational tasks with the Duty Officers of AUS-BATT, POLBATT and OGG. She is a professional soldier, dealing with intelligence back home in Poland. This is her second tour here in UNDOF. "I'm happy to be here again and I enjoy working with so many peacekeepers from different nations. It's a great experience for my future career in the Polish Army."

Article by Capt Günther Kreiml, SOPR

Photos by Capt Damian Zebzda and WOII Gernot Payer, Force Photographer

USG for Peacekeeping Operations pays his first visit to UNDOF

From 7th - 9th May 2009, the Under - Secretary - General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alain Le Roy, visited UNDOF to gain a detailed and up-to-date overview of the Mission, in addition to meeting with Syrian and Israeli authorities. In an interview with the Golan Journal, he shared his thoughts on his first visit to UNDOF and its activities.





...stability on the Golan is a must in order to give the peace process any chance.

Interview with USG Mr. Alain Le Roy by Capt Günther Kreiml

Golan Journal: Mr. Le Roy, UNDOF celebrates its 35th anniversary on 31st May of this year. What are your impressions about this peacekeeping mission?

Alain Le Roy: I think it's a great and historic achievement that for the past 35 years, UNDOF has continuously and completely fulfilled its mandate in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 350, i.e. to use its best efforts to maintain the ceasefire and to see that it is scrupulously observed, as well as supervise the Agreement and its Protocol with respect to the Areas of Separation and limitation. For me, it's quite an achievement that in these 35 years, with around 1,040 troops and a modest budget, UNDOF has managed to prevent any escalation of incidents. I would like to put on the record my appreciation for the outstanding work being done by UNDOF, under the exem-

plary leadership of Major-General Wolfgang Jilke, who has shaped it into a more flexible and effective force.

Golan Journal: In your opinion, what role does UNDOF have, as a peacekeeping operation, in the context of the Middle East peace process?

Alain Le Roy: For me, it is absolutely clear that stability on the Golan is a must in order to give the peace process any chance. We all know that progress is dependent upon the will of the parties, and a stable environment. UNDOF is providing that stable environment on the Golan. I am hopeful that in the coming weeks and months a new momentum will be provided to the peace process.

Golan Journal: During your visit you have had a chance to interact with many political and military dignitaries on both sides. Can you share with us their impressions of UNDOF and its effectiveness?

Alain Le Roy: Each and every one of them has been unequivocal in their praise for UNDOF and its effectiveness. I have not heard any adverse remarks from anyone regarding any aspect of UNDOF's activities. It gives me great satisfaction and pride that UNDOF and Major-General Jilke enjoy the complete trust and confidence of both parties because of its professionalism, transparency and impartiality. I am extremely pleased with what I have seen and heard here.

Article by Capt Günther Kreiml, SOPR
Photos by WO II Gernot Payer,
Force Photographe



Mr. Alain Le Roy of France is the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and assumed his duties formally in late summer 2008. He brings to the job extensive experience in public administration, management and international affairs, both at the political level and in the field. Most recently, Mr. Le Roy served as *Conseiller Maître à la Cour des comptes* and as Ambassador in charge of the Union for the Mediterranean Initiative.

Thirsting for education

Between January and May UNDOF members were treated to six informative and educational presentations about the Middle East Conflict held by LtCol Patrick Eichenberger, UNTSO.



Presentation in the briefing room of UNDOF HQ

LtCol Eichenberger, a well experienced Swiss officer, served in UNTSO as the Deputy Chief of the Observer Group Golan from May 2008 to May 2009 in Tiberias. He was specially selected as a member of the United Nations Headquarters Board of Inquiry in New York in spring 2009 investigating incidents against UN facilities in the Gaza Strip between December 2008 and January 2009.

Six different topics related to the Middle East Conflict were presented in Camp Faouar over several evenings. This course of lectures was a great success because the timeliness of the information and the unique content. The listeners were given an unexpected and deep picture of the regional history and the current situation in the Middle East today.

Patrick - thanks a lot for your efforts! I hope that in the future this kind of event will inspire more imitators in UNDOF.

Article by Maj Alexander Unterweger, SSO M/PR

Photos by Capt Günther Kreiml, SOPR



PERSONAL born August 28, 1963 in Berne

EDUCATION MBA, St.Gallen University; Ph.D., Geneva University; Professor, State/Canton Zurich

LANGUAGES Native French, native German, English and Spanish

PROFESSIONAL Private Banking, Wealth Management, Assistant Vice President, 1990, Clariden Bank, Zurich; International Controlling & Finance, 1991, Weitnauer Group Basel; Management Consulting, Strategy, Restructuring and Cost Cutting, Senior Management Consultant, 1992/93, Management Zentrum St.Gallen; Turnaround & Interim Management, 1992-2003; Partner, Member of the Board at BMSAG, Zug. Industrial Market Research, Consulting and Training, since 2004

TEACHING since 1986 Kaderschule St.Gallen 1986-89, Ecole de Cadres and University of Geneva 1990-91, Kammer-schule Zurich 1991-93, University of Applied Sciences St.Gallen 1994-95 and 2004, University of Tehran 2004, University of Applied Sciences Zurich since 1999

MILITARY Colonel, Staff Ground Forces, Berne; UNTSO, Military Observer, Lebanon & Syria, 1996/97; UNMIK, Liaison Officer to KFOR, Kosovo, 2003/04; UNTSO, Deputy Chief Observer Group Golan, Israel, 2008/09

HOBBIES Family, Contemporary History, Travelling, Private Pilot



Handing over a certificate by FC and SSO M/PR

UNDOF Ambassador's Day and Military Attaché's Day

A very special event for the honorable guests to UNDOF with the rare opportunity to gain detailed impressions of the Mission on the Golan Heights.

The Force Commander of UNDOF MGen Wolfgang Jilke received about 30 Ambassadors and 17 Military Attachés at Camp Ziouani on 12th of June. The honorable visitors were taken on a tour to UNDOF Posn 22 and the UNTSO OPs 73 and 52 where they were briefed about the Mission area.

*Article by Capt Günther Kreiml, SOPR
Photos by WO II Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer*



The Ambassadors and Military Attachés arrived in Camp Ziouani

Statement Ambassador

I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the Ambassador's and Military Attaché's Day on 12th Jun 2009. We definitely sensed the highly professional and positive atmosphere at the mission. The day worked as a sort of eye-opener to how important the work done by the UNDOF really is. The current leadership of the mission has truly contributed to the current good relations with both the Israeli and the Syrian side, which was perfectly illustrated by the opportunity for us to go the places we did. The fact that we don't hear a lot about incidents in Golan is definitely because of the great effort from UNDOF, and we strongly support your future work.

H.E. Ms. Liselotte Plesner
Danish Ambassador



Short briefing at Posn 22



The FC briefs during the tour

Statement Military Attaché

At the time of my arrival in Israel in Feb 2008, I was appointed as the first Slovak Defense Attaché in Tel Aviv. I could remember the significant presence of the Slovak troops within the UNDOF contingent. I am still proud to hear of the compliments that their replacement was managed in a very professional way. As the Slovak UNTSO observers are still stationed behind the lines, I always appreciate the Force Commander's invitations for diplomatic corps accredited to Israel. The last Military Attaché's Day was the most impressive event I remember here. We enjoyed an absolutely unique trip along the border road and the visit to a closed OP. This was my first opportunity to share the personal feelings of the Slovak UNTSO staff directly in the field.

LtCol Robert Tibensky
Slovak Defense Attaché in Tel Aviv

35 Years of UNDOF

History of UNDOF

The history of UNDOF can be traced back to the Arab-Israeli War, commonly known as the Yom Kippur War that commenced on the 6th Oct 1973. On 22nd Oct 1973, the United Nations Security Council called for a ceasefire. Two days later, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 339 that resulted in the deployment of the United Nations Emergency Force II (UNEF II) in the Suez Canal area, stabilizing the situation.

On the Israel-Syria front, the United States undertook a diplomatic initiative, which resulted in the "Agreement on Disengagement" between Israeli and Syrian forces. The Agreement provided for an Area of Separation and two equal Areas of Limitation of Forces and Armaments on both sides of the Area of Separation.

The agreement also provided for the establishment of a United Nations Disengagement Observation Force to supervise its implementation. The Protocol to the Agreement outlined the composition and functions of this Force. The Agreement and the Protocol were signed on 31st May 1974 and on the same day; the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 350 through which establishment of UNDOF was formalized with a Mandate to, "Use its best efforts to maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria and to supervise the Agreement and Protocol to the Agreement with respect to the Area of Separation and Areas of Limitation."

The initial troops for establishment of UNDOF in 1974 were moved from UNEF II in Sinai and comprised of personnel from Austria and Peru, who provided the Line elements and Canada and Poland who provided the Logistics elements. The HQ was located at Damascus. UNDOF was re-organized in 1993 and UNDOF HQ moved from Damascus to its present location in Camp Faouar.

Since its establishment in 1974, over 50,000 military personnel representing Austria, Canada, Croatia, Finland, India, Iran, Peru, Poland and Slovakia have contributed to the success of UNDOF. Of these, 54 personnel including from Austria (23), Canada (13) Poland (9), Finland (7) and Iran (2) have made the supreme sacrifice of their lives in the cause of peace on the Golan Heights.

The Force is commanded by a Major General and has an authorized strength of 1047 military personnel. In addition, it is supported by approximately 50 UN International Staff and 100 UN National Staff. The current composition includes contingents from Austria, Croatia and Poland that provide the Line Battalions and India and Japan that provide the Logistics Battalion. Canada is still represented by two Staff Officers in UNDOF HQ. 75 Military Observers from the Observer Group Golan are also under the operational command of the Force Commander UNDOF.

The Force is deployed in two camps, 20 permanently manned positions, eight outposts, one Military Police Checkpoint and eleven observation posts. Bulk of the Force is deployed on the Syrian side except for the Logistics battalion, one Austrian Position and HQ of the Polish battalion that are on the Israeli side of the cease fire line.

Major General Wolfgang Gilke, the current Force Commander, assumed command of the Force on 6th Feb 2007 and is the 16th Force Commander adding to the illustrious chain of previous Force Commanders that came from Peru, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Poland, Netherlands, Ireland, Canada and Nepal.

The Force supervises the Area of Separation and maintains the ceasefire by conducting static and mobile operations by day and night and investigating and reporting any violations to the Agreement. It also carries out inspections of military positions in the Area of Limitation on both sides to ensure that the terms of the Agreement are scrupulously adhered to by both sides.

It is a measure of the success of the Force that since its establishment in 1974, the Israeli-Syrian Area of Separation has remained the most stable region in the Middle East. A great deal of this success though is also due to both host nations that have demonstrated good faith and trust in the Force and its functioning.

UNDOF also assists in identification and marking of minefields including promotion of minefield awareness amongst civilians and provides assistance to the International Committee of the Red Cross in the passing of mail and people through the area and in the provision of medical services within the means available.

Over 35 years of its history, UNDOF has had the privilege of hosting numerous high ranking dignitaries both military and civilian representing the troop contributing countries, the United Nations and other international organizations. Some of the illustrious recent visitors are the Presidents of Austria, Slovakia and Croatia and the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.



History of UNDOF troop contributing countries

<p>1974</p> 	<p>In June, the contingents from Austria, Peru, Poland and Canada were deployed from UNEF II in Sinai to Syria. AUSBATT inherited the northern part of the Area of Separation (AOS) including the Mt. Hermon area and PERBATT the southern part. The Polish Logistical Contingent POLLOG and CANLOG were to cover the logistics tasks. Canada also supplied communications detachments to all UNDOF units.</p>
<p>1975</p> 	<p>In September, the outgoing Peruvian Contingent handed over their tasks in the southern part of the Area of Separation to the Iranian Contingent.</p>
<p>1979</p> 	<p>In March, the FINCOY, a strengthened Company from the Finnish Battalion in UNEF II, was deployed at the Golan and took over the tasks of the outgoing Iranian Battalion. And in August, after the mandate of UNEF II ended, the whole Finish Battalion was sent to the Golan.</p>
<p>1993</p> 	<p>In October, the POLLOG completed its mission and returned to Poland but in December a Polish Infantry Battalion took over the mandate tasks from the Finnish Battalion in the southern part of the Area of Separation and also employed in HQ staff positions.</p>
<p>1996</p> 	<p>Peacekeepers from Japan took their first step on the Golan Heights and were engaged mainly in logistics operations together with the CANLOG forming LOGBATT, which has been functioning ever since.</p>
<p>1998</p> 	<p>Starting in May, peacekeepers from the Slovakian Republic (SLOVCON) were integrated into the Austrian Battalion and in May 1999, the reinforced SLOVCON took over the 3rd Coy in AUSBATT also providing staff personnel to various HQ functions.</p>
<p>2006</p> 	<p>The Canadian Forces closed out its Logistics Operation DANACA in March being replaced by an Indian Contingent. INDCON is mainly deployed in Camp Ziouani but also fulfills various HQ functions.</p>
<p>2008</p> 	<p>In June, the last Slovak Contingent left the Golan and the first contingent from Croatia took over their tasks in the 3rd Coy of AUSBATT and HQ functions.</p>



35 Years on the Golan Heights

The Syrian sky was cloudless and the Mediterranean breeze was just beginning to billow the national flags on the Camp Faouar parade square, as UN troops from Austria, Canada, Croatia, Finland, India, Japan and Poland gathered to mark the 35th Anniversary of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).



Under the sharp eye of the COO, LtCol Rainer Winter, UNDOF troops marched smartly to their positions on the parade square before the Chapel in Camp Faouar. Dignitaries, diplomats and a host of special guests were escorted to their seats and the 35th Anniversary ceremony began.

Representatives from countries that have lost soldiers in the service of peace presented memorial wreaths in memory of those who have died in UNDOF in the service of peace. This was followed by a tree-planting ceremony that symbolized the optimism and hope for the future in the region and for the mission.

The Force Commander, in his address emphasized that UNDOF has fulfilled its mandate for many

years and represents a significant example of peace-keeping success in a volatile region. Both host countries have remained positive and supportive of the UNDOF mission while a year of experience in the area has made the mission efficient, streamlined and an example throughout the world.

While the mission area remains relatively calm and stable, the potential for renewed violence is always present. The Area of Separation between Israeli and Syrian troops is still one of the most heavily mined areas in the world and one of the most heavily built up military regions on both sides of the line of separation. Due in large measure to the good efforts and professionalism of the soldiers in UNDOF, viola-

tions of the Agreement of Separation are resolved quickly and without escalation.

After an impressive march-past of UNDOF's operational equipment and soldiers everyone was invited to attend special luncheon prepared in the International Kitchen where dignitaries and soldiers alike enjoyed unique menu selections from each of the current troop contributing countries. The remainder of the afternoon was spent enjoying the company of new friends and reflecting on a remarkable parade and an impressive milestone in mission history.

*Article by Maj Greg Penner, SSO Pers
Photos by WO II Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer*



March-past by the UNDOF troops

UNDOF Media/Public Relations Team present book to FC



Initiated by the Chief of Staff in July 2008, the UNDOF Media and Public Relations Section was tasked to publish a photo book to commemorate 35 years of UNDOF on the Golan Heights. Containing a short historical section and a general overview of the branches, units and current operations, this book is spiced up with lots of historical and current pictures that give a good impression what the Mission is about. After a year of intensive work, we are proud to present “UNDOF peacekeeping moments“ to the Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke, who intends to use this book for presentation purposes but also makes it available for all UNDOF members.

*Letter of Appreciation by
the Ambassador of AUSTRIA*



Since my arrival in Syria in November 2008 I had the chance to visit UNDOF on several occasions. I had the honor to be invited for the official ceremonies of the change of command as well as the medal parade but also for less formal occasions like the visit of the actor and humorist Erwin Steinbauer. Also joining in with officers and soldiers at the march of AUSBATT in May this year was a pleasure and a challenge equally.

Through these visits I could gain some insight on the highly professional organization and implementation of a rather complex and very successful mission, but more important for me is the warm welcome I enjoy in Camp Faouar and throughout the mission-area. Maybe there is a feeling of Austria which extends through the camp and the positions that I enjoy so much - a feeling that has naturally settled in after 35 years of the Austrian Battalions presence.

The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force is celebrating 35 years of successful mission this month and with it also the Austrian Battalion, which has been on the ground since the first deployment. UNDOF is often described as one of the most successful and effective peace keeping missions of the United Nations. Keeping peace in a region full of turmoil and armed conflict is a daily success of equilibrating reliability, presence, diplomacy and strength as well as readiness for all kind of action on the ground. For this I commend all the officers and soldiers serving under the command of MGen Wolfgang Jilke as well as all their predecessors.

*H.E. Ms. Maria Kunz
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Embassy of the Republic of Austria*

*Letter of Appreciation by
the Ambassador of CANADA*



Canada has been a continuous participant in the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) since 1974. Our contribution to UNDOF, which began as Operation DANACA, originally comprised more than 200 personnel, including teams of the United Nations Military Observers to supervise the ceasefire and establish a buffer zone between Syria and Israel, and a support unit that provided the entire mission with logistics support. By March 2006, when Op DANACA closed, more than 12,000 Canadian soldiers, sailors and air personnel had served on the Golan Heights.

Canada continues to regard UNDOF as an extremely important mission which greatly contributes to the stability of the region. We are proud to have been with the mission from the outset, proud of the accomplishments of all those who have served with it in the past, and proud of the Canadian officers who continue to represent us so well. I have visited the Golan and met with the UNDOF forces on several occasions and have always been most impressed by their professionalism, dedication, and enthusiasm for the mission.

My staff and I extend our thanks and congratulations to the Force Commander and all members of the UNDOF mission for the excellent work they are doing in the cause of peace, and extend our best wishes for much continuing success in this 35th anniversary year and in the future.

*H.E. Mr. Glenn V. Davidson
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Embassy of Canada*

*Letter of Appreciation by
the Ambassador of CROATIA*



Having a privilege to extend my contribution to a high quality Golan Journal, I would like to congratulate UNDOF on its 35th anniversary. As the one of the oldest ongoing UN Peacekeeping Mission anywhere, UNDOF is certainly one of the more successful ones, owing much of its success to the efforts of the peacekeepers past and present. Therefore I am very proud that the contingent of the Republic of Croatia participates in UNDOF mission in the Golan Heights contributing the implementation of the agreed disengagement of the Syrian and Israeli forces and maintaining the ceasefire.

Croatia, being transformed from a recipient of UN assistance to a country actively participating in peacekeeping missions, sent its first contingent to participate in the UNDOF mission in June 2008, as part of an Austrian battalion. The deployment of a Croatian company in the UNDOF mission increases Croatia's participation in international peace operations. The country's membership of the UN Security Council and NATO, as well as the anticipated membership of the EU should be viewed in that context. Currently Croatian Armed Forces participate in 13 UN peacekeeping operations throughout the world.

It is no any surprise that Croatian peacekeepers conduct their duties by high professionalism and dedication. Namely, our squad is a mix of experienced soldiers from our Homeland war, and the mission from Afghanistan, with young eager soldiers. They are fully committed not only to keep up with standards set by their predecessors but also to improve their positions.

In closing, I would like to evoke of our very memorable last Christmas spent with the President of Republic of Croatia and Supreme Commander of the Croatian Army H.E. Mr. Stjepan Mesić during his visit to Camp Faouar and Croatian soldiers.

*H.E. Mr. Dražen Margeta
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Embassy of the Republic of Croatia*

Letter of Appreciation by the Ambassador of JAPAN



The Government of Japan extends its most heartfelt congratulations on the success of UNDOF for the past 35 years. The mission of UNDOF is an important and crucial one. The presence of UNDOF personnel in the Golan Heights has successfully kept this area free of armed conflict for more than three decades. Japan wishes to add its voice of highest praise for the discipline and professionalism demonstrated by UNDOF since its establishment. We know that its mandate has not been carried out without precious sacrifice on the part of UNDOF personnel. Today, Japan expresses its deep appreciation to General Wolfgang Jilke and his comrades of UNDOF for their dedication to the noble and necessary mission which has been entrusted to them.

Japan has been dispatching contingents of its Self-Defense Forces to UNDOF's logistic support battalion since 1996. With troops provided by many countries, representing different cultures and languages, commanding officers are surely presented with many challenges. But this multicultural experience can only enhance the capacity of this and future generations of Japanese peacekeepers to contribute to United Nations peacekeeping efforts wherever they may be deployed. I am certain that when they return to Japan it is with a sense of accomplishment and treasured memories of the comradeship they experienced with the troops from other countries and with an appreciation of the history, beauty, and culture of this land and its people.

Thus far, Japan has sent more than 1000 personnel to UNDOF. Some of them, benefiting from their valuable experience with UNDOF, have subsequently served in peacekeeping missions in other parts of the world. The relevance of Japan's experience with UNDOF cannot be overstated. When the Japanese Government considers dispatching members of its Self Defense Forces to other UN peacekeeping efforts, its experience with UNDOF is invariably brought up. Indeed, UNDOF is Japan's point of reference in terms of its participation in any UN peacekeeping operation.

Japan remains steadfast in its commitment to world peace and security through its participation in UN peacekeeping missions within its domestic legal framework.

*H.E. Mr. Masaki Kunieda
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Embassy of Japan*

Letter of Appreciation by the Ambassador of POLAND



Polish Forces units have operated in the Golan Heights as a part of UNDOF since the start of the mission. As soon as the peacekeeping mission was established in May 1974, as the implementation of UN resolution 350, a Polish military unit was deployed to Camp Ziouani.

Primarily, duties of this first Polish battalion, determined as logistic tasks, were to support the operational units of the disengagement on the Syrian side by delivering water, food and military supplies - as well as engineering services like mine clearance and area control.

As a result of gaining more responsibilities, the Polish unit, previously known as POLLOG (Polish Logistics), grew in size, until it reached the total number of 357 soldiers and civilians. In 1993, it became operational (POLBATT) and took over duties from the Finns. Since then, the Polish Military Contingent has been patrolling the southern part of the disengagement zone and monitoring the area from its observation posts along the demarcation line. There were two Polish generals nominated UNDOF Force Commanders: in 1991 - MGen R. Misztal and in 2003 - MGen F. Gagor.

Apart from military tasks, for 35 years Polish soldiers have been undertaking humanitarian actions that improve living conditions of the people from the Golan Heights area. The Polish military hospital served the local community for years, afterwards the temporary medical support was offered in the framework of the so-called "white Sundays". Recently the fellow peacekeepers from POLBATT - in cooperation with the Polish Embassy in Damascus - have taken part in other charity activities, such as sponsorship and delivery of wheelchairs and hearing-aid sets for Syrian disabled children.

Polish soldiers have had the honour to serve under the UN mandate in the Golan Heights for 35 years. In February 2009 the Polish government decided to withdraw the Polish troops from UNDOF because of the change of the political conception concerning the Polish military presence abroad, however, the Polish battalions will continue their peacekeeping missions around the world meeting its international obligations.

*H.E. Mr. Michal Murkocinski
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Embassy of the Republic of Poland*

In the heat of the fire

Friday, 19th Jun 2009, 21:00hrs. The siren in Camp Faouar is wailing and the signal tells like a screaming voice: "FIRE ALARM!"

Within a few minutes all available firemen and women are ready. We immediately check our vehicles and equipment while the commander gets the first information. A wide patch of grass has caught fire in vicinity of Position 80 and threatens to encroach on to the Position. The fire brigade of POLBATT is already on the spot, yet due to the fire spreading very fast, the support of the AUSBATT fire brigade was requested.

Accompanied by an EOD-team, a medical team and the Duty Officer, the AUSBATT fire brigade hits the road. While heading towards POLBATT we can already see many smaller fires. But arriving at Posn 80 we face a massive fire storm raging at the Technical Fence along the ceasefire line west of the Area of Separation. The air is full of smoke and brings tears to our eyes. Posn 80 is already prepared for evacuation if necessary. All soldiers off duty moved into the shelters to be safe from exploding mines initiated by the fire at the big mine field between Position 80 and the Technical Fence. The sound of exploding anti-personnel mines fills the air mixed with the dull detonation of anti-tank mines.

The raging fire with the current wind direction does not seem to represent an acute risk for Posn 80 while we discover several other fire sources which could threaten the Position if the wind moves towards it. However, these fire sources are beyond the Technical Fence, right behind the so called "Watergate", a gate within the Technical Fence for emergency crossing. In order to reach these fire sources it would be necessary to move close to the "Watergate", but first of all it is necessary to get permission of the Israeli Defense Forces to move so close to the gate. Following hectic phone calls the permission is finally given. Immediately our fire truck moves forward and all fire sources within reach are fought across the Technical Fence. Although this brings the desired effect, all forces remain highly alert and keep a watchful eye on the course of the fire.

At three o'clock in the morning, we reevaluate the decreasing wind and the stable wind direction and we can return to our station in the early morning hours, while POLBATT's fire brigade remains on the spot. Back in Camp Faouar the fire truck needs to be refilled, a burst tube has to be replaced and the motor pump is refueled with gasoline making the equipment operational again. Everybody realizes that the next turn-out could come very soon!

Article by LtCol Dr. Wolfram Heidinger, FMO
Photos by Capt Christian Zedlacher, SDO



The fire on the Technical Fence



Early situation close to OP53



The fire in the early morning

White Sunday on the Golan Heights

On the International Children's Day peacekeepers of the Polish Contingent organized free medical treatment, the so called White Sunday, for inhabitants of the village Al Rafid and the surrounding area.

In two separate tents men and women with children were examined. Also ambulances were on standby in case of medical needs. The inhabitants of Al Rafid rarely visit a doctor due to the long distance to the nearest medical facility and lack of money to pay for examinations. So the exams and treatment performed by the Polish medical team improves the health and well being of the local population.

It is understandable that untreated diseases can cause serious problems in people's health. During the examination of a three month old child a doctor observed pneumonia and his treatment probably saved the baby's life. And in another case one man had untreated fractures of his ribs from a past accident.

During the examinations the medical team, with great support of



CO and SMO POLBATT with a young mother and her baby

perature prevailing in the medical tents everybody did their best and the team examined more than 100 patients, half of them children.

When the Commander of POBATT was asked about the idea for this project, he answered:

must have confidence that our presence here is not a form of occupation but help, full of concerns for the fate of these people. This event was organized on the initiative of Polish peacekeepers, officers of my staff and soldiers from the operating



All together for a healthy future



Polish medical personnel with their patients

the Syrian Liaison Officers acting as interpreters, also paid attention to the prevalence of symptoms of influenza. Despite extremely difficult conditions due to the high tem-

"Every military mission has its specifics. Therefore, here on the Golan Heights, we can not create an image of soldiers as warriors but as protectors. The local population

company, and civilian personnel in POLBATT. I am proud to be the commander of these people."

*Text and Photo by
Capt Robert Winiszewski, OPS Officer*

INDCON Change of Command

For the 6th Rotation of INDCON it was time to bid farewell to UNDOF and hand over LOGBATT to the 7th Rotation, celebrated with the TOCA Parade organized on 24th Jun 2009. On this day, the atmosphere in Camp Ziouani was very festive and everyone was working with gusto and enthusiasm. This was the formal occasion for the 7th Rotation to take over all responsibilities and they were looking forward with lots of optimism.

The new Indian Contingent is comprised of troops primarily from the 169 Field Regiment (OP Hill) along with specialist detachments from Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, Army Medical Corps, Corps of Signals, Corps of Military

Police, Army Air Defense, Army Postal Corps, Engineers, Army Service Corps and Comptroller Defense Accounts.

The outgoing CO LtCol Gopal Kapoor said: "My peacekeepers enjoyed working for UNDOF and I will take home a part of it in terms of pleasant memories and an experience of a lifetime."

The incoming CO of INDCON, LtCol Amit Ashri, promised to continue the good work being done and to try to better the achievements of previous contingents. After the parade, everybody was invited to the International Kitchen for a sumptuous meal and refreshments.

*Article by LtCol Kartik Kumar Singh,
SMO*

Photos by WO II Gernot Payer

Brief history of 169 Field Regiment (OP Hill)

The 169 Field Regiment (OP Hill) is the first artillery unit of the Indian Army to be nominated for a UN Mission. Immediately after being raised on 1st Nov 1963, the Regiment gave a sterling account by delivering extremely accurate fire-power during the 1965 Indo Pak war and earned the Honor-Title "OP Hill". Once the artillery assault had ended and the three attacking infantry battalions moved on to secure the shelled area, they found no opposition and counted more than 1200 enemy dead and their equipment destroyed.

The Regiment, comprised entirely of the Martial Marathas, has been honored as The Bravest of the Brave by Indian Army Headquarters. Considered as super specialists in Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency Operations, for acts of exceptional bravery and tactical acumen the regiment has earned a tally of 94 awards.



The signing ceremony



The FC inspects the troops



Flag presentation

Behind the scenes

J-CON has been a part of the UNDOF mission on the Golan for 13 years. The Japanese contingent consists of three UNDOF HQ staff members and 27 peacekeepers forming the Transportation Platoon (PLT) as part of LOGBATT.

The J-CON Transportation PLT is composed of the Camp Ziouani J-CON HQ, the Transportation Section in Camp Ziouani and a Detachment Section in Camp Faouar. While the J-CON HQ section supports the mission of the Transportation and Detachment sections and coordinates with UNDOF HQ, LOGBATT HQ and the Japanese Government. The J-CON Transportation Section executes UNDOF's second line transportation needs.

To fulfill their tasks they operate 21 types of vehicles in Camp Ziouani, from small cars to large trucks. Their mission is linked to the daily life of all UNDOF members in the form of transporting basic needs like food, water, laundry, heavy equipment and the daily local staff bus run.

There are eleven members in the J-CON Detachment Section based in Camp Faouar operating priority heavy equipment. They were selected from the engineering unit of the Ground Self Defense Force. Their main tasks include road development and maintenance, snow removal in winter and emergency vehicle recovery.

For the seasonal snow removal on Mt. Hermon, the members of 27th J-CON have advanced skills and experience, since most of the men come from the snowy northern tip of Japan, Hokkaido.

Detachment Leader Capt Yoshito Hirayama said:



J-CON vehicle on transportation mission

“Our aim is to match the construction needs of the UNDOF mission. In addition, and with the maximum of our ability, this Section coordinates closely with fellow contingent countries. As done in the past, in future J-CON stands proudly behind the scene, supporting the UNDOF mission for peace and stability on the Golan Heights.”

*Article by Lt I Daisuke Nakashima, Adjt /PressO /J-CON
Photos by SSgt Kaoru Omura, Signal Sgt/J-CON*



Grader maintaining a road



Maintenance of patrol tracks

Patrol track E2A leads from Posn 10 up Mt. Hermon in the direction of Posn Hermon South. The route is 8 km long and goes from 1200m to 2400m above sea level along the ceasefire line, the so called A-Line.

Red colored stones mark the patrol track to show patrolling peacekeepers the safe way through the mined terrain. In June, the AUSBAT EOD team cleared the track of mines found on the road and patrol track last winter.

Before this track could be opened again, the 3rd Coy had to maintain the markings. In teams of two, peacekeepers from Posn 10 took kits with food and water, blue waistcoats and helmets, weed trimmer, red paint and went for their job. „It was

hot and challenging, but interesting at the same time. We repainted all the stones and cut the grass to make the patrol track as safe as possible. When we came to the peak of the hill, a delightful view was our reward“, the exhausted Croatian peacekeepers stated after finishing the job in two days.

One week later, the same activities had to be carried out on patrol track E4B on the opposite eastern side of UNDOF's Area of Responsibility. This track is about 3,5 km

long and not as steep as E2A, so the job was finished in one day. This time the team was accompanied by a dog from position 32A, which never misses a foot patrol. „Even this track is relatively short it took us a long time because we had to check nearly every stone for snakes and spiders. And that day was very hot without wind, so we made a couple of short breaks“, one of team said.

*Article by LtI Jelena Srakić,
Deputy Coy Commander*

Photos by WOII Drago Magdić, NBC NCO



E2A of the first day



E2A at the end of the first day



E2A second day, spraying



E4B painting

Drugs, explosives, suitcases and two dogs

It was INDCON's turn for rotation. Peacekeepers had packed their stuff and were ready to go home. But there was still one procedure left to run through.

Eager to do their jobs, the dogs were sitting next to their dog handlers. They gazed at 210 pieces of personal luggage lined up in the huge hall of the Gym in Camp Ziouani, just waited for the command to start. The luggage and cargo was dog checked twice; one time for drugs and one time for explosives. After a three month special course and continuous further training the Belgian sheep dog is specialized on all kind of drugs and illegal substances. The German sheep dog is specialized on military and civilian explosives. In case of detecting one of these substances the dogs would lay or sit down and point at the spot the suspicious smell comes from. There after a random check of the luggage was done by the MP patrolman for electronic items, alcohol and other sensitive items. This is done in accordance to the customs regulations of the respective country. This time all checked items were alright and the clearance was given for the luggage to be loaded onto the waiting trucks, which had been sealed then to avoid items being added or taken off, without notice. This is important because the trucks go straight through to the airplane with no additional checks.

On the very day the Indian peacekeepers were ready for heading to the airport for their flight home their hand luggage had to run through the same procedure like the day before the heavy bags did. The subsequent farewell ceremony was done under the watchful eyes of MP Patrolmen to make sure no



UNDOF - MP dog handler



Ready to search for drugs and illegal substances

additional items could be handed or taken over. Then the convoy consisting of 19 vehicles left Camp Ziouani to the airport, at all times being escorted by the MP.

At the airport the luggage was stowed in the Boeing 737, and a safe

travel out of the mission area was granted due to conscientious work of the UNDOF Military Police.

*Article by WO I Herbert Bachmayer,
Photos by SSgt Tanja Heischkamp
and Ms. Andrea Meidlinger*

UNTSO Medal Parade

On 12th Jun 2009, some of UNTSO's finest UNMOs gathered at the salubrious ISMAC House in Damascus to be recognized for their service to the UN.

The parade, presided by COGG-D LtCol Martin Van De Ven, was well attended with over 20 UNMOs being presented with the UNTSO Medal. For some on parade, this was not their first mission having spent many years representing their country in previous UN and non UN Missions. However, for some on parade this is their first mission and the presentation of the medal was a very proud moment for them. One such recipient was Capt Antti Kahkonen from OGG-T who was extremely proud to receive his first UN Medal. Capt Kahkonen, a Finnish reserve officer said: "the memories from serving on operations will last forever, but it is also nice to be presented with a medal which I can wear proudly for many years to come."

It was also touching to see some of the "olds and bolds" also proudly wearing their medal following the parade. Like all good Italians, the colorful Capt Paolo Visalli found the occasion to be an extremely emotional and proud moment, taking every photo opportunity and wear his medal and be photographed with his colleagues. The youngest UNMO medal recipient on parade, Capt Brad Taylor had the honor of presenting the COS, Gen Robert Mood, with his UNTSO medal. Some departing members were also formally recognized for their contributions. Commandants Mark Prendergast and Gerald O'Grady, and Maj Aleksey Smirnov were presented with Certificates of Appreciation and COS UNTSO Commendations respectively. For all of those



UNTSO medal recipients from OGG and OGL on parade



COS UNTSO, Gen Mood, presenting Maj Aleksey Smirnov with a commendation

on parade, the words of the COS will likely echo as they reflect on their contribution to UNTSO. As indicated by the COS, if the situation in OGL and OGG's Area of Operations are calm, then UNTSO is achieving its mission.

*Article by Capt Kellie Robinson
Photos by Cdr Kristian Haugberg*



The UNTSO medals

