

GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



January - March 2008
No. 114



Dear Reader!

The new Golan Journal is now ready for you. Only a few weeks in the mission I am proud of the result you are holding in your hands and I'm proud to provide you with our highly appreciated magazine. The Golan Journal has to stay up-to-date and attractive for all readers. This will be one of the main challenges during my tour at UNDOF.

With the tireless support of UNDOF's Press Officers and our Force Photographer I'm sure that we will achieve this goal. Dear experienced Press Officers, thank



Our team: Stefan, Yozo, Alexander and Gerry

you for your job well done and I count on your knowledge and practice in the future, too. For the newly arrived Press Officers - welcome to Capt Dariusz Osowski (PB), Capt Gunter Leinfellner (MP), Capt Kranthi Kumar (INDCON) and

Lt I Yusuke Yamamoto (J-CON) - I count on your motivation and dedication to continue the success story of the Golan Journal.

UN business is a continual coming and going. Therefore a lot of other people arrived within the last three months. Who? See pages 6, 7 and 8.

Furthermore we have a lot of interesting stories for you to read. - *Enjoy it!*

Yours sincerely,

Capt Alexander Unterweger, SOPR

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Editorial Staff:

*Editor in Chief,
Proofreader & SOPR
Capt Alex Unterweger*
*Editor & SSO M/PR&W
Maj Stefan Eder*
*Editor & DMPIO
Capt Yozo Akiyama*
*Proofreader & SSO Pers
Maj Steve Power*
*Proofreader & SO Trng
Capt Stefan Zaiser*
*Editor, Layout Designer
& Force Photographer
WOII Gernot Payer*

Unit Press Officers:

AUSBATT - Capt Alexander Neuherz
SLOVCON - Lt II Jan Kováč
INDCON - Capt Kranthi Kumar
J-CON - Lt I Yusuke Yamamoto
POLBATT - Capt Dariusz Osowski
OGG - Capt Ronald Oliver
MP - Capt Gunter Leinfellner



Editorial Office:

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

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!

Although we still have a few cloudy days, spring has largely arrived in the Golan. We can look forward to warm and busy days ahead in the coming summer. Of course, we have all been working hard in the past few months on the numerous projects and activities that I mentioned in the previous issue of *The Golan Journal*. At this time, I would like to provide you with an update of our progress.

As you will recall, UNDOF has been actively reviewing our operations, renewing some of our equipment, and revitalizing our approach to the Mission. Our hard work is paying off, as we have had some success in gaining our objectives. Following a concerted team effort by the Chief of Mission Support, Chief of Staff, and their associated personnel, UNDOF was successful in convincing UN Headquarters to provide us with additional funding this fiscal year. This money has enabled us to make progress in our most urgent programmes. As a result, UNDOF already welcomed the arrival of three new RG-32M Light Armoured Patrol Vehicles (LAPV), along with new advanced night vision equipment. In addition, two of our SISU armoured vehicles will soon be sent for conversion into armoured ambulances, providing us with the crucial ability to bring medical assistance to our personnel under combat conditions.

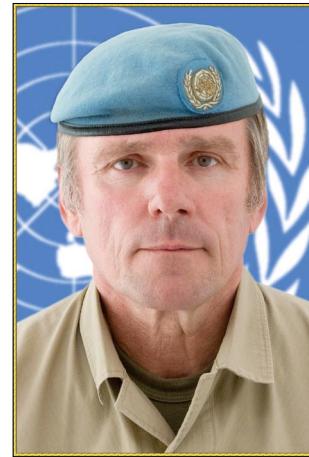
Progress has been made in other significant projects as well. Reflecting the closer cooperation being forged between UNDOF and OGG, planning for the creation of our Joint Operations Centre is well underway. Significant progress has been made in building new patrol paths to support our operations, which has brought immediate and visible benefit to our mission success. This was made possible through the hard work of J-CON engineers and LOGBATT as a whole, who have ceaselessly toiled through very challenging spring conditions to achieve this success. AUSBATT, POLBATT and OGG observers have increased their operations and activities, especially at night, to better enforce the terms of the Ceasefire Agreement. Force HQ Coy has worked hard to improve its abilities to rapidly integrate into Battalion operations, while many others have adopted new responsibilities as Gate Guards and other important roles that contribute to our force protection and operational effectiveness. Our support personnel have made progress in cleaning up our Camps and improving our Positions. I congratulate you all for your professionalism in dealing with the changes that have taken place.

There are many challenges ahead of us. Changes will soon arrive in POLBATT as personnel are redeployed to better address the current security situation in the southern area of operations. Included in this project will be an increase of personnel and infrastructure at Position 85, the establishment of two new watchtowers, and prioritization of Force HQ Coy on operations in the southern area. Patrol path and road development will continue, along with improved physical force protection work in the form of new walls, fences and gates. Chief of Mission Support and his staff are already working hard towards success in our 2008/09 budget, one that should bring us more new RG-32M LAPVs and other operational equipment.

In the light of recent regional security developments, my overall priorities in the coming months are to continue to improve UNDOF's operational effectiveness and our abilities to fulfill the demands of our mandate, and to prepare UNDOF for possible contingencies in our mission area. To do so will require from everyone a heightened awareness about the seriousness of our task, and of the increased demands that the regional security situation may place upon us. As an ancient Roman named Flavius Vegetius Renatus wisely once said, "Si vis pacem, para bellum" - "If you want peace, prepare for war." We need to approach our duties with the proper mindset, and to keep in mind that things may not always stay as calm as they currently are.

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

*Thank you, Ďiakujem, Danke, Merci, Dziękuje,
Arigato, Dhanyavad, Shukran, Toe Dah!*




Major General Wolfgang JILKE
Force Commander UNDOF

Chief of Staff Words

In this article I want to share with you my thoughts on modern technology in present day conflicts and briefly describe the extent of the use of technology in our mission. I must admit that the article by Walter Dorn entitled *“Technology for Peacekeeping: Tools of the Trade?”* and the subsequent joint DPKO and DFS project to explore potential use of low and medium-cost technologies in peacekeeping operations in order to improve task implementation, inspired me to write on this subject.

As a starting point I will focus on the difficulties and threats faced by UN missions in current conflicts and the initiative to make UN Forces more relevant to the unpleasant realities confronting them.

It is without question that present warfare involves the widespread use of highly advanced technology. As a term, it is generally associated with technologically advanced weaponry and tactics. Accordingly, UN missions should also be provided with all the available tools to do their mandatory tasks effectively, with the ability to provide the necessary force protection to its forces as assessed by the threat and to represent the same or comparable level of advanced technology as the parties that are in conflict.

If this were the case then peacekeepers would be seen as a competent and modern force capable of carrying out their assigned mission thereby sending a clear sign to all parties concerned to not deliberately violate the UN agreement. It is obvious that weak and underequipped UN forces will be ignored and their operational activity will be significantly limited by all parties. Furthermore, this can lead to an increase in violations and hostile actions and in the end to a dramatic deterioration of the security situation in the Area of Operation. Moreover, UN forces and installations which look vulnerable could also be targeted by any terrorist group as a primary soft target.

There are different UN missions with different mandates which require a spectrum of advanced technological equipment. However, broad use of modern technology is constrained mostly by fiscal limitations. The UN does not have a limitless budget. Having said this, the financial priority given in UNDOF will focus on increasing the operational capabilities and safety and security of the forces. This includes: upgrading UNDOF command and control system, increasing mobility of the forces, maintaining situational awareness, enhancing night operations, maintaining Geographical Information System (GIS), upgrading of the physical security system and maintaining/improving defense capabilities against possible NBC attack. We fulfill these requirements by using an array of different advanced technology tools available to us such as: intranet and internet, satellite TV broadcast, secured video communication, military and civilian communication network, satellite telephone communication, CCTV cameras and motion sensors, short, medium and long-range Night Vision Equipment (3rd and 4th generation), GPS units, modern hardware and software in GIS, personnel NBC protection kit and detection and warning equipment, modern EOD equipment (bomb suit, mine detectors, line and hook set), and new Light Armoured Patrol Vehicles (LAPV).

Why is this new technology important particularly for UNDOF's mission? It isn't enough just to mention the new Night vision and LAPVs we received or will receive soon. Night vision on today's 24-hour battlefield; it's an absolutely essential tool. It allows UNDOF to turn night into day. With the proper night-vision equipment we can see a person standing over 4km away on a moonless, cloudy night! Thus, UNDOF



is capable of conducting its operations 24/7. As for the new LAPVs, they are suitable for off-road driving on difficult mountainous terrain and driving on narrow urban terrain within UNDOF's Area of Responsibility. With the addition of these two “tools” we can better monitor the cease-fire line and the Area of Separation. They will also shorten the reporting and reaction time to any incident. Automatically, safety and security of our soldiers is increased as LAPV is mine-hardened and also protects the crew against small arms fire.

In spite of the list of new equipment mentioned above there still exists operational limitations in some areas within UNDOF's AOR. Thus, the UNDOF Management Staff deliberately plans to allocate a level of funding in the next budget specifically earmarked for force protection and continue to research advanced technologies available to us in pursuit of obtaining new equipment that could mitigate any operational shortfalls in the quickest possible time.

Keep up the good work.

Colonel Andrzej Ostrowski
Chief of Staff UNDOF

Visits to UNDOF

by Capt Yozo Akiyama, DMPIO



Mr. Masahisa Sato, member of the Japanese House of Councillors, visited Camp Faouar (14th Jan 2008)



Ms. Susan McLurg, ACABQ Chairman, joined the Camp Faouar and UNDOF line tour (22nd - 24th Feb 2008)



BGen Jai Prakash Nehra, DFC UNIFIL, familiarized with INDCON and briefed the troops at Camp Ziouani (29th Feb - 8th Mar 2008)



Col Marek Szymonski, Main Expert / Operational Command, inspected rotation in POLBATT and made an address to polish soldiers (27th Feb - 12th Mar 2008)



FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke was briefed the participants of the Austrian "5th Strategic Leadership Training Course" (9th - 10th Mar 2008)

Mr. David Corbin, Ethan professor at Tufts University together with some students, visited CF, Family shouting place, Quneitra and Posn 60A (9th Jan 2008)

20 Indian Air Force officers, visited INDCON at CZ (20th Jan 2008)

Heads of UN Agencies to SAR, visited CF, Posn 16, 27, 37 and 60 (30th Jan 2008)

Dr. Rainer Stinner, member of the German Bundestag, familiarized with UNDOF and met with the FC at CF (31st Jan 2008)

BGen Abdul A. Darwish, SSAD, participated in the Medal Parade of J- CON at CF (13th Feb 2008)

H.E. Oldrich Hlavacek, Slovak Ambassador to Syria, familiarized with the tasks of SLOVCON (12th Mar 2008)

Mr. Markku Korkka, Group Leader and ex-peacekeeper, familiarized with UNDOF and POLBATT at CZ (14th Mar 2008)

German Federal Academy for security, visited CZ (17th Mar 2008)

New People in UNDOF



The new CLPIO

On 25th Jan 08 LtCol Robert Sobczak took over as the new Chief Liaison Protocol Information Officer (CLPIO) UNDOF. Prior to this appointment and since September 2007 he was SSO ORG-PLANS in the UNDOF COS Office.

LtCol Sobczak was born on 8th Nov 1969 in Aleksandrów Kujawski, located in Kujawy District, Poland. In 1992 he graduated from the Logistic Military School in Poznań. His first posting was as the Logistic Officer in 34th Air Regiment in Gdynia. As a first lieutenant he attended graduate studies at the Gdańsk University in Sopot, and in 2000 he completed a Master of Economy degree with specialization in Transport and Logistics.

From 2001 to 2002 LtCol Sobczak studied postgraduate studies at the Naval Academy in Gdynia. During these studies he learned all aspects of Logistics of Naval Forces. After graduating from the Naval Academy he was appointed as the Commanding Officer of the Logistic Squadron which is a part of the 43rd Air Base in Gdynia. After completing his postgraduate studies at the Gdańsk High Administration School in 2005 he earned the title as an Expert of Public Purchases. LtCol Sobczak also sits on the Board of Polish Public Purchase Experts' Committee.

In 2005 LtCol Sobczak was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. In 2007, just prior to the start of his UNDOF tour, he finished the Special Pedagogic Course for Lecturers at the Naval Academy in Gdynia.

Since 1992 LtCol Sobczak has worked for the Polish Naval Air Forces in Gdynia. Throughout his military career He has participated in numerous national and multinational military exercises such as the 'Baltops', 'Baltic Sarex', and 'Noble Mariner'.

LtCol Sobczak is happily married to his wife Maria and the father of two sons: Mateusz, 17 and Wiktor, 14. Since 2003 he has been living with his family in Rumia, in the vicinity of Gdynia.

His major hobbies are parachuting, football, swimming and cooking. He also enjoys listening to rock music from the 70's and 80's and electronic music.



The new CO/POLBATT

LtCol Krzysztof Malankiewicz was born on 24th Mar 1967 in Szczecin, Poland. In 1987, after he graduated from secondary school, he began his military career as a cadet of General Bem's Officers' School in Toruń. After leaving the Officers' School LtCol Malankiewicz was assigned as a platoon leader, and then a Battery Commander in the legendary 1st artillery regiment in Bartoszyce.

LtCol Malankiewicz was promoted to Lieutenant in 1995 and was a MLRS BM-21 Battery Commander, sound reconnaissance Battery Commander and finally Service Battery Commander. In 1998 Captain Malankiewicz took over a post with the 9th Artillery Regiment Staff.

In Warsaw he graduated from Academy of National Defense and became the Deputy Commander of Artillery Battalion in 20th Mechanized Brigade in Bartoszyce. In 2004 he served as an Operations Officer of the 2nd Battle Group in operation "Iraqi Freedom" in Karbala during the Al-Sadr uprising. Soon after Maj Malankiewicz was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and given the command of an Artillery Battalion.

His training and education qualifications are: High Officers' Artillery Course (1998), Academy of National Defense (1999-2001) and Postgraduate Course at the University of Warmia and Mazury.

LtCol Malankiewicz is married; his wife works as a pedagogue. He has two children, Agnieszka and Michal. In his spare time LtCol Malankiewicz enjoys history and ice hockey.



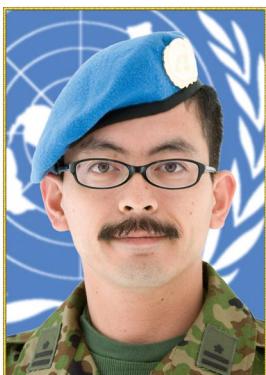
The new CO/AUSBATT

LtCol Hans-Peter Hohlweg was born on 17th Jun 1968 in Kobersdorf, Austria. He joined the Austrian Armed Forces in 1986. After graduating from the Military Academy in Wiener Neustadt, LtCol Hohlweg was transferred to the Armored Reconnaissance Battalion in Mistelbach. His appointments there were Platoon Leader, Company Commander, Operational Information Officer, Chief Operational Officer and Deputy Battalion Commander.

LtCol Hohlweg is a graduate of the Austrian National Defense Academy and holds a Master's Degree in Defense and Security Management.

In his first mission abroad in 2005 LtCol Hohlweg served as an Intelligence Officer in Kosovo. LtCol Hohlweg took over command of AUSBATT on 28th Jan 2008. His twelve month posting as the CO/AUSBATT is his first tour with UNDOF.

LtCol Hohlweg is married to Gabi and has two children, Beatrice and Stefan.



The new CO/J-CON

Maj Kentaro Yushita, the 25th Commanding Officer of the Japanese Contingent to UNDOF, was born in Fukuoka, Japan, on 8th Apr 1972. After graduation from the National Defense Academy of Japan in 1995 with a degree of Bachelor of Social Sciences in International Relations, he joined the Officer Candidate Course and in 1996 was promoted to Second Lieutenant.

Maj Yushita's military career includes Rifle Platoon Leader in the 42nd Infantry Regiment 8th Division (1996-1999), Company Executive Officer in the 1st Infantry Regiment 1st Division (2002-2004), Instructor at National Defense Academy (2004), and Company Commander in the 39th Infantry Regiment 9th Division (2006-2007).

In 2006, Maj Yushita completed the Command and General Staff Course. In 2006 and also joined United Nations Staff Officer Course at Swedish Armed Forces International Center in 2007. In addition, Maj Yushita has earned a Master in Public Policy degree at John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, in 2002.

Maj Yushita enjoys driving, reading books, and listening to music. He has also earned a Private Pilot Glider Certificate from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration in 1994.



The new FPM

Major Siddartha Rathore hails from Rajasthan, western state of India, to a family of soldiers with highest repute. Major Rathore was commissioned to Skinner's Horse, one of the oldest and finest Armored Regiments of the Indian Army.

In 1994, Maj Rathore completed his training from the Officers Training Academy in Chennai and was awarded the Sword of Honor and Presidents Gold Medal in recognition for being the overall best Cadet and first in the Order of Merit.

Major Rathore has undergone a large number of professional courses in his career. He has served in varied terrain including Coy Commander in a counter terrorism environment in the mountains and Tank Squadron Commander in the deserts.

Major Rathore was posted as an instructor in the Indian Military Academy, a premier institute, to train Gentlemen Cadets Commissioning in the Army as officers. He has been adequately trained as a military police officer prior to arriving in this mission.

Major Rathore is happily married to Mrs Nupur Rathore and is blessed with a son.



The new FMO

It's the third time that LtCol MD Wolfram Heidinger joins UNDOF, but the first time as Force Medical Officer (FMO). The first time at UNDOF he served as Medical Officer (MO) and Senior Medical Officer (SMO) AUSBATT for six months in 1984. Again as MO/SMO AUSBATT in his second mission from June 2004 to January 2006.

LtCol MD Heidinger was born in Graz on 23rd Jul 1953. For more than 54 years he has been living near Leibnitz where he graduated high school in 1972. After a short training as a signaller in the Austrian Army in Salzburg, he studied medicine at the University of Graz. There he graduated in 1981.

Since October 1984 he has been working in his own medical practice in Leibnitz, a small town in the south eastern part of Austria, as a general practitioner.

LtCol MD Heidinger is married and has three children age 26, 24 and 19 years and a grandson of six years. He enjoys running, do-it-yourself projects and gardening. He completed various marathons such as the marathon of Vienna, London, Beirut and the special (because of its hilly running track) 'Welsch-marathon' in Styria.



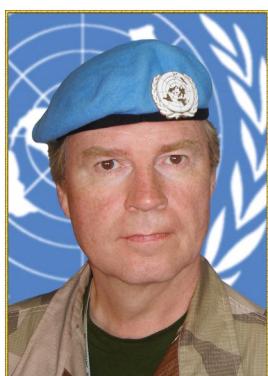
The new COGG

LtCol Michal Rohleder was nominated Chief Observer Group Golan (COGG) on 25th Jan 2008. He was born on 28th Jun 1964. In 1983 when he graduated from Military Secondary School he joined the Military Academy. Then, in 1987 he graduated as an engineer, promoted to Lt and became a platoon leader in the Engineer Brigade located in Sered. From 1987 to 2002 he served in different positions at the same military base dealing with engineer and logistic issues.

In 2002 he graduated from Higher Staff Officers' Course in Liptovsky Mikulas, was promoted to LtCol and served at Land Forces HQ in Trencin as a Chief Logistic Department responsible for supply for all Land Forces units.

In 2005 LtCol Rohleder turned back to his original profession and assumed the responsibility of Deputy Chief Engineer Support and EOD Department at General Staff of Slovak Armed Forces in Bratislava. LtCol Rohleder's international experience includes 8 months as Force Protection Commander at Kabul International Airport (ISAF mission).

LtCol Rohleder is married to Ivana. He has three children, Stanislava (22), Ondrej (21) and Michal (16). His hobbies are sports in general.



The new COGG-T

LtCol Carl-Gustav Ebbhagen was appointed Chief Observer Group Golan – Tiberias (COGG-T) on 20th Mar 2008. He was born on 19th Sep 1954 in Umeå.

After conscript service he joined the Army Technician School and graduated in 1978. After two years as a platoon leader and two years as a company commander LtCol Ebbhagen was assigned Commanding Officer (CO) in one of the Lapland Brigade battalions from 1991 to 1994.

In 1993/94 he instructed in arctic tactics in the Northern Army Combat School. In 1996 he graduated from the Advanced Course, National Defense College. He then returned to the Northern Army Combat School as the Head of the Training Department. In 1998 LtCol Ebbhagen returned to the National Defense College in Stockholm. In 2001 he was appointed as the Head of the Training Department at the NBC Defence Centre in Umeå. During this assignment he also served six months as a plans officer, J3 CONOPS, in KFOR HQ.

In 2003 LtCol Ebbhagen was appointed as the Deputy Head/COS of the Baltic Co-operation Department at the Swedish Armed Forces HQ. In 2004 he became the SAF Project Manager for Defense Environment International cooperation.

LtCol Ebbhagen is married to Inger and has six children – two daughters and four sons. His hobbies are playing guitar, making music, bird watching, history and anything on wheels that is fast.

Force Commanders New Year's Reception

On 24th Jan 2008 our Force Commander, MGen Wolfgang Jilke introduced a novelty to UNDOF.



In recognition of the common efforts of all UNDOF soldiers to make the mission a success, he invited men of all ranks for a reception at the Austrian Sgt & NCO's Mess at Camp Faouar. Some 120 men, non-commissioned (NCO) and commissioned officers from all contingents as well as members of the Civilian Staff and UNTSO met at noon and after an icebreaker MGen Jilke welcomed his guests.

Firstly, in presence of MGen Ian Gordon, Chief of Staff UNTSO, he bid farewell to the outgoing Commanding Officer of the Austrian Battalion, LtCol

Robert Glanner, and

of Observer Group Golan, LtCol Jon Veel, thanking them for their excellent support to UNDOF.

MGen Jilke then turned his attention to the men of his Force. He stressed the need of good cooperation of all members of UNDOF to fulfill the mandate. He especially acknowledged the outstanding contribution of the soldiers and NCO's to keep the Force up and running. MGen Jilke said that without the skills and abilities of these soldiers of all levels he would not be able to achieve his tasks. He emphasized the importance of every single soldier – cook, craftsman, guard, patrolman, or whatever the specialist might be – to get the job done. He congratulated his soldiers for their flexibility in the case of events not foreseen as well as dealing with routine duties. He encouraged us to carry on and not to get tired in our efforts to keep UNDOF on high readiness and contribute to the peace in the region.

After a long applause MGen Jilke was able to open the well prepared and generous buffet and he was seen



MGen Jilke welcomes MGen Gordon



UNDOF Members at the FC's reception

talking to the men of his Force till late in the afternoon. UNDOF's soldiers still talk about the reception and hope that it will become an annual event. This is not only because of the recognition of their work and to meet the FC, but also to exchange their experiences with their friends and comrades from all the nations that support UNDOF.

Article by Maj Stefan Eder, SSO M/PR&W
Photos by WOII Gernot Payer, Force Photographer



The generous buffet is open

Change of Command - AUSBATT

On 28th Jan 2008 LtCol Robert Glanner handed over the command of AUSBATT to his successor LtCol Hans-Peter Hohlweg

The presence of our Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke, Chief of Staff Col Andrzej Ostrowski, numerous Branch Heads and Battalion Commanders of UNDOF as well as Military Attachés and Civilian Ambassadors illustrated the importance of this ceremony. With this, the social solidarity of the outgoing CO, LtCol Glanner, was expressed. This ceremony took place under rainy conditions at the parade square in Camp Faouar.

In his farewell speech LtCol Glanner thanked the soldiers of AUSBATT for their precious contribution towards the accomplishment of the mission on the Golan Heights. Also the Slovakian soldiers, who are performing duty in AUSBATT, earned great respect from him. After 15 challenging, but fascinating months as the Commanding Officer of AUSBATT LtCol Glanner expressed his thoughts: *"I want to state that the soldiers of AUSBATT did their job professionally and with reliability. In fact, they were representatives of peace in this region and also represented the Austrian Republic in a dignified way!"* Before the handover of the flag LtCol Glanner expressed



Dr. Karl Schramek, Austrian Ambassador to Syria and the FC taking the salute

words of respect and admiration to his superior commander.

LtCol Hohlweg, who received the standard presented to him by our Force Commander, expressed words of welcome to the soldiers and guests of honor. After the ceremonial signatures he was officially appointed to the position of Commanding Officer of AUSBATT. He mentioned that he is eager to fulfill the demanding tasks as battalion commander with pride and diligence. At the same time he appreciated the operational readiness of all AUSBATT soldiers. During his two-week handover period the new Commanding Officer established a clear picture of the well conducted duties in AUSBATT. Especially the high degree of pride and professionalism demonstrated by all soldiers. LtCol Hohlweg requested from the Austrian and Slovakian soldiers that they continue contributing to the good reputation of AUSBATT. He added that the professionalism, solidarity and honor amongst the men and women of AUSBATT are a pillar of our success. Additionally he encouraged every member of AUSBATT to continue to uphold

these values. For LtCol Hohlweg the soldiers on the Golan Heights are highly motivated. He also stated that he was also very pleased with



... to the new CO AUSBATT

the comradely welcome as the new commander. Immediately following the official part of the change of command ceremony the soldiers marched past the Guests of Honor. The ceremony continued with a reception in the Austrian Officers Club.

It ended with the farewell of the outgoing Commanding Officer LtCol Glanner.

*Article by Capt Jan-Niklas Vandenberg,
SDO/AUSBATT*

*Photos by WOII Gernot Payer,
Force Photographer*



Handing over the flag...

Gopher Hole 2008 – an AUSBATT Exercise

From 26th to 28th Feb 2008 the traditional Gopher Hole exercise took place in AUSBATT. Gopher Hole is an internal exercise of the battalion and at the same time it completes the training sessions for rotation XII/07.

The exercise, planned by COO/AB Maj Thomas Stacher, was conducted by AUSBATT at different Positions of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Coy together with the Force HQ-Coy in Camp Faouar. The expectations of this three-day exercise were to test the Battalion's knowledge, execution and handling in extreme but realistic situations. In AUSBATT's area of operation such situations can happen every day and endanger our soldiers. Therefore, training is paramount to ensure that the Battalion is ready to fulfill its assigned mission.

The main focus of the exercise was on the cooperation between the alerted action forces such as the Fire Brigade, the Medical-team, the EOD-team, the battalion and with UNDOF units like the Observer Group Golan (OGG).

Exercise Gopher Hole is to be conducted twice a year and generally lasts three days. During the exercise 'normal' duties have to continue. Not only for the operational parts of the battalion, but also for the Field Post Office, the Welfare Office, the PX AUSBATT and the Camp Commander, which is responsible for the infrastructure.

"It's no use to be four hours inside the shelter. It's important and it depends on whether the well practiced situations can be handled in the right way and the information flow can be maintained at the same time," stated COO/AB, the officer-in-charge of this exercise. The battalion commander, LtCol Hans-Peter Hohlweg, was pleased with this successful exercise.

Maj Stacher added that this exercise proved that our battalion is able to respond to and solve critical situations and to fulfill the mandate of the force in AUSBATT's area of responsibility. Furthermore it has also shed light on areas where we can improve as an integrated unit within UNDOF.

Article by LtI Ekkehard Gröppel,
Welfare Officer/AB

Photos by Sgt Thomas Hatzl,
Photographer/AB



Cpl Robert Zimmermann searching for mines



WOII Norbert Janach treating an injured soldier



The rescue of an injured soldier by the AUSBATT firefighters

There is Nothing Above

On 29th Mar 2008, Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke together with CO AUSBATT LtCol Hans-Peter Hohlweg, Coy Commander Maj Oswald Spendier and all Position Leaders 1st Coy, conducted a ski-patrol in the Mount Hermon area.



Under excellent weather conditions, a short briefing was held by alpine guide SSgt Willegger, Position Leader Hermon South (HS). Afterwards the ski-patrol started out in direction of 'Panoramaroad'. After this short but lovely ski-run, the patrol continued uphill

because of the sufficient snow coverage. In summertime these paths are not passable due to the extreme mine threat. The patrol continued after a refreshment stop at HS in over-snow vehicles, the so called "Pistenbullys", in direction 'Hausberg'. At the summit of the mountain at approxi-

mately 2320m above sea level, a belated birthday present was presented to the FC. According to mountain tradition, the mountain-song of 1st Coy was sung accompanied by a guitar player.

Then the patrol went on, down the steep slope of 'Hausberg' to Posn Hermon Base (HB), where the heated sauna awaited the guests. The ski-patrol was completed successfully and without any incidents.

The highlight of the FC's visit to 1st Coy was the singing of well-known soldier songs and guitar-playing at the evening celebration



Handing over a birthday present to the FC on the 'Hausberg'

in direction of the A-line. At several observation points, the FC got detailed briefings about the exact course of the A-line and about the latest incidents that occurred in this area. Some of these observation points, especially along A-line, are only reachable during wintertime



The FC in action

at HB. The FC and the CO AUSBATT proved not only to be excellent skiers but also connoisseurs of numerous soldier songs.

The 1st Coy regarded the participation of the FC in the patrol, the visit and the overnight stay as a great appreciation towards the soldiers of the 1st Coy. As OiC of the 1st Coy I say many thanks to our FC. His leadership style motivates us all.

*Article by Maj Oswald Spendier,
OIC 1st Coy/AB
and MCpl Manfred Kraut, HB
Photos by MSgt Gernot Maier, HS*

A Symbol of Peace

Change of Command in POLBATT between officers from 20th Mechanized Brigade in Bartoszyce.

On Monday, 10th Mar 2008, a Change of Command ceremony took place in the presence of our Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke, the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Israel His Excellency Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska, Poland's Defense Attaché in Israel Col Ireneusz Drążyk and many other honorable guests. Of course our friends from India, Japan, Austria, Slovakia, Canada

When the white-red flag was on the pole, the first who took the floor was LtCol Jerzy Sulima. He summarized six months of activities of the battalion during the service under the blue UN flag and expressed his gratitude and satisfaction. To appeal to the guests of the ceremony and soldiers he said, *"I want to extend words of thanks and best wishes*

to all military and civilian members of our peacekeeping family and say Thank You to all of you." After that he said a few words to the Polish soldiers in their mother tongue: *"You performed your tasks professionally. Your effort together with our colleagues from the different contingents contributed to peacekeeping in*

this part of the world. Thank you for your commitment, discipline and for the good image of the Polish Military Forces abroad!"

The Ambassador His Excellency Magdziak-Miszewska emphasized the importance of the UN mission on the Golan Heights. He went on to thank the soldiers of the 28th rotation and wished their successors to be determined and vigilant in their service towards peace in this region. The new CO, LtCol Malankiewicz, who also serves in the 20th Mechanized Brigade in Bartoszyce like LtCol Sulima, said in his inaugural address: *"I am very grateful to you, Jerzy, for all experiences and advice you have given to me during these past days and for providing me a detailed hand-over of my responsibili-*



FC and COs signing official report

and representatives of the Israel Defense Forces were also in attendance.

LtCol Krzysztof Malankiewicz took over the command of the 29th Rotation of the Polish Military Contingent. The ceremony which took place on POLBATT's parade square in Camp Ziouani began with the entrance of the POLBATT standard in guard of honor assist. At 13:00hrs LtCol Jerzy Sulima reported to the Force Commander MGen Jilke the readiness of the ceremony. Next, our Force Commander invited His Excellency Magdziak-Miszewska to salute the parade. This was followed by MGen Jilke saluting the soldiers and saying loudly and clearly in Polish language: *"Czolem Żołnierze."*



Saluting the standard of POLBATT

ties. I wish you and your soldiers a safe trip home and all the best in our homeland". The speeches were followed by the ceremony of handing-over the POLBATT's standard. The ceremony concluded when our Force Commander and the Commanding Officer's signed the handover/



Handing over POLBATT's standard

takeover documents and planted an olive tree as a symbol of peace. This was overseen by His Excellency Magdziak-Miszewska.

On 13th Mar 2008 soldiers of 28th Rotation of POLBATT returned home.

Article and Photos by
Capt Dariusz Osowski, PressO/PB

Polish Soldiers in the Service of Peace

Once again soldiers from the Polish Military Contingent have been decorated with the 'In the Service of Peace Medal'. The ceremony took place on 25th Jan 2008 in Camp Ziouani.



We were honoured by the presence of our Force Commander MGen Wolfgang Jilke, Defence Attaché of the Republic of Poland Col Ireneusz Drążyk, Chief of Staff Col Andrzej Ostrowski, the members of the Polish Embassy, Commanding Officers of the contingents and soldiers of all military contingents, representatives of Israel,

Polish Association and UNDOF civilian staff members. The medals were awarded by the FC. The FC expressed his gratitude for the Polish soldiers and wished them all the best in the future. He also offered condolences for the tragic military airplane accident. In the memory of aviators, who had died in this tragic accident, a minute of silence was

observed and the Polish National Flag was lowered to half mast. General Jilke also gave a speech in Polish. We were impressed! Secretly I found out that the FC got private Polish lessons by Maj Bogusław Szkudlarek.

The Defense Attaché of the Republic of Poland, Col Drążyk, gave words of thanks to Polish sol-



The UNDOF Medal - *In the Service of Peace*

It was established in June 1974 to supervise the cease-fire between A- and B-side; to supervise the disengagement of A- and B-side forces; and, to establish a buffer zone, as provided in the Agreement on Disengagement between A- and B-side Forces of 31st May 1974. The Mission continues to perform its functions effectively with the cooperation of the parties.

The ribbon contains a central stripe of UN blue with a red line down the middle representing the UN patrolled Area of Separation and Area of Limitation; two narrow stripes of black, representing the volcanic rock of the Golan region appear on either side with two narrow bands of white, symbolic of the snow on Mt. Hermon.

At either end are wide bands of burgundy, symbolizing the purple haze at sunset and the native thistles of the Golan. Ninety days service is the qualifying time to be awarded the medal.

diers regarding their presence in the Middle East and the very valuable service rendered on the Golan Heights. The Attaché stated that our activity prevented escalation of various conflicts. CO POLBATT, LtCol Jerzy Sulima, stated that on behalf of all Polish soldiers he is proud of Poland's peacekeeping service with the UN. LtCol Sulima was the first soldier to receive the medal from the FC. The next in line who received the medal were Honor Guards, Members of Staff and



*Polish Defence Attaché Col Ireneusz Drażyk
the soldiers from the Coys. During the march past on the parade square Polish soldiers marched very*

proudly with the medals on their uniforms. All guests applauded and admired the parade. After the official part of the parade all guests were invited to taste traditional Polish food. After the Medal Parade ceremony the Polish Military Contingent continued their duty concerning the handover responsibility; a necessary and important task to prepare the next rotation for their duty at UNDOF.

*Article and Photos by
Capt Sylwester Właszczyk, SOTN*

Polish Prime Minister reading the Golan Journal



Polish Prime Minister Mr. Donald Tusk meets Polish UNDOF soldiers in Jerusalem on 10th Apr 2008

'PACHPAN' gets a lifetime experience on the Golan Hights



On the Watchtower of Posn 80A



On the majestic Mt. Hermon



Helping Hand at Posn 12

You can spot the INDCON engineers anytime and anywhere over the wide spread UNDOF mission area maintaining all the air conditioner and boiler heating systems. The INDCON Engineers, part of 55 Engineer Regiment (PACHPAN AJAY), consider this as a rewarding experience. Sgt Uggar Singh said:

"The work gives me a sense of great self-respect. It is my pleasure to contribute to our Austrian, Polish, Japanese and Slovakian comrades and build up the relations with them while working together!"

Cpl Jitender Singh added: *"This mission and especially our work allows us to talk to other contingents and acquaint ourselves with each other's culture and traditions. It is a lifetime experience for us Indians which we can't afford to miss!"*

Honorary Lt Kishan Singh mentioned: *"Working for UNDOF, which spreads from the Majestic Mt. Hermon to the deep point merging the borders of Israel, Jordan and Syria is an experience in itself. We engineers consider it as an honour to be selected for this marvellous mission!"*

These are the dedicated soldiers of INDCON engineering team providing engineer support to UNDOF. With giving priority to the problems of positions we were always just a call away for everyone.

Article by Capt Kranthi Kumar, CCEO/LB

Photos by Cpl Inder Singh, LB



Moments of Pride - INDCON 4th Rotation

The Parade standing strong

On Friday, 8th Feb 2008, the Medal Parade of INDCON took place, where the 4th rotation of the Indian contingent has been awarded the UNDOF 'In the Service of Peace Medal' on the successful completion of 90 continuous days in UNDOF mission area. The Commanding officer, CISS, the Indian officers of UNDOF and the men from LOG-BATT made the parade a success.

The Force Commander, the Indian ambassador to Israel, His Excellency Mr. Arun Singh, UNDOF VIPs, our friends and other guests attended and appreciated the parade.

The Medal Parade was commanded by Maj Rahul Yadav, Deputy Commanding officer LOGBATT. This was the first time for all INDCON soldiers to receive such a medal of an international mission. Therefore, everyone felt greatly honoured.

In his short address, the FC praised the performance of the contingent in fulfilling their mission. On completion of the ceremony, all the guests enjoyed the buffet and conversation with each other at the International Kitchen in Camp Ziouani.

*Article by Capt Kranthi Kumar, CCEO/LB
Photos by LCpl Jai Prakash, LB*



Awaiting the Medal



The Medal presented by the FC

J-CON Change of Command

The J-CON Change of Command ceremony was held in Camp Ziouani on 5th Mar 2008 under the blue sky.



The 24th and the 25th Rotation of J-CON

The outgoing 24th CO, Maj Yoshibumi Ogura, handed over the command of J-CON to his successor, Maj Kentaro Yushita, on 5th Mar 2008. Our FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke, Col Takaharu Shimazu, the Japanese Military Attaché to Israel, UNDOF Branch Heads, and all other contingent COs were present to honor this ceremony.

Maj Ogura and Maj Yushita both signed the Handover/Take-over protocol. Maj Ogura sincerely expressed his gratitude for the part-

nership, very close cooperation and excellent hospitality of UNDOF. He then praised the outgoing members of the 24th J-CON for completing their mission safely and encouraged the new members to have a safe and successful mission with UNDOF.

The new 25th CO, Maj Yushita, expressed his appreciation to Maj Ogura and his soldiers for their successful mission and their contribution to UNDOF operations. He then declared that the 25th rotation of J-CON would continue to uphold

the proud history and success of their Japanese predecessors for which they have been recognized for during the



Shaking hands firmly - MGen Jilke, Maj Yushita and Maj Ogura

past 13 years since the first rotation was sent to this mission. In addition, Maj Yushita also declared that the Japanese Contingent, as military professionals, would perform at their highest level in order to sustain UNDOF operations.

Following the official part of the ceremony, all honorable guests were invited to a reception at the "A-Line", the J-CON Mess.

*Article by Lti Yusuke Yamamoto,
Adj/PressO/J-CON
Photos by SSgt Kenichi Osanai,
Signal Sgt/J-CON*



The soldiers of the 25th Rotation of J-CON

We are J-CON Cooks!

Three J-CON cooks are serving in UNDOF at this time, an expert cook in Camp Faouar and two young cooks in Camp Ziouani.

Sgt Takeshita, an expert cook with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, is the only J-CON cook in Camp Faouar. His first mission at UNDOF was from February 1997 to August 1997. A career professional cook, SSgt Takeshita has more than 30 years cooking experience.

His motto is 'food is the source of power for force' and he mentors young cooks not only by his vast knowledge and leadership but by his positive attitude. I can only recommend that you go to the Austrian International Kitchen (AIK) and taste some Japanese food; if there is any left!

In Camp Ziouani, two young J-CON cooks work in the International Kitchen. SSgt Kajioka, a 26 year old, is relatively new to the cooking profession so he is using his experience with UNDOF and the opportunity to work in an international kitchen to improve his culinary skills.

Since he started to work in the International Kitchen he has been intrigued with the Indian and Polish cooks cooking foods that he has never seen before in his life. SSgt Kajioka was also surprised that most vegetables are not same as the ones from Japan in their shape and color.

The second Camp Ziouani cook is Sgt Takahashi. He is 23 years old and has worked for Japan Air Self-Defense Force as a cook for four years. He is delighted when he is told that the food that he prepared is delicious.

For SSgt Kajioka it was surprising that the Polish cooks use potatoes very often. He thinks that this is very similar to Japanese people eating rice and 'miso soup' almost every day.

No matter the nationality of all the UNDOF cooks - their common goal is to deliver "scrumptious" meals for all UNDOF soldiers. Moreover they want to cultivate friendship and mutual understanding through their experiences, including daily rivalry between each other during their six month mission.

Article by Lt I Yusuke Yamamoto, Adj/PressO/J-CON

Photos by SSgt Kenichi Osanai, Signal Sgt/J-CON



Working in the Kitchen - SSgt Kajioka and Sgt Takahashi



SSgt Kajioka and Sgt Takahashi welcome you.



SSgt Takeshita in the AIK

Special crossing at MP C-Detachment – normal duty but sensitive matters

As Second in Command of the Military Police Charlie Detachment (MP C-Det) I would like to provide you with an overview on the responsibilities of this UNDOF Military Police Detachment.



There are three Polish soldiers, one Slovakian soldier, one Indian soldier and I (an Austrian soldier) conducting MP duties at MP C-Det. A lot of UNDOF Personnel meet us on a daily basis and see one aspect of our responsibilities. Now I'd like to inform you about the non-routine business, or other responsibilities, at MP C-Det.

I would like to give you an overview on the different kinds of special crossings between A-side and B-side. There are not only soldiers that are crossing from one side to the other but also Pilgrims, bridal couples with their wedding guests, students, and even fruit. Once a year we have to deal with the crossing of apples. But that's another story ...

One very famous and well-known crossing is the Pilgrim crossing,

which also takes place at MP C-Det every year. The latest Pilgrim crossing started in the morning where buses organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) brought the Druze pilgrims to the Gate at A-side. There were approximately 350 male Druze pilgrims dressed in their traditional black pantaloons and shirts, white hats, shaved heads and big moustaches. First they were checked by the Israeli authorities at A-Gate, then they walked through to the MP C-Gate. At the MP C-Det they were subsequently checked off on the ICRC list and finally walked to B-Gate. The elderly ones were driven

through by our Military Police staff. During this special crossing MP C-Det collaborates closely with the CLPIO, Force Reserve and UNTSO personnel to ensure that all crossings are managed in a professional manner and within current agreements dealing with the movement of personnel between A-side



MP supervising the special crossing

and B-side. Our main tasks are to control the traffic between the two Gates, stay in close contact with all UN personnel involved via radio and to support the CLPIO as he directs. Every special crossing at MP C-Det is unique and is a new challenge for us. This is why the MPs at C-Gate must be very flexible in order to adjust to all situations in order to guarantee a smooth and successful crossing.

Article by WO II Gerald Berghofer,
2iC MP/C-Det

Photos by WO II Arnold Felfer,
Force Photographer 2007



ICRC handling administrative matters

Time goes by – at a quick pace!



MP-Platoon with MGen Wolfgang Jilke



On 4th Mar 2008 at MP C-Detachment, a small but nevertheless fine crowd took part at the Change of Command Ceremony of the Force Provost Marshal.

Presided by our FC MGen Wolfgang Jilke, Maj Siddartha S. Rathore took over command of the UNDOF

Military Police Platoon (29 Military Policemen) from the outgoing FPM Capt G. Janiszewski. The new designated DFPM and Deputy Commander of the MP Platoon is Capt Gunter Leinfellner from the Austrian Forces.

Article by Capt Gunter Leinfellner,
DFPM

Change of Command and Medal Parade UNTSO – Observer Group Golan

On 25th Jan 2008 and on 20th Mar 2008 Change of Command Ceremonies and Medal Parades, respectively, were held in the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission (ISMAC) House in Damascus and Mixed Armistice Commission (MAC) House in Tiberias. The two ceremonies chaired by the Chief of Staff UNTSO, MGen Ian Gordon, were also attended by some official guests, station staff and non-UN guests.

MEDAL PARADE

The two ceremonies started with the presentation and award of the UNTSO-Medal to observer officers who had already completed a 90 day tour of duty within UNTSO mission. A total of 41 officers from Observer Groups Lebanon, Damascus and Tiberias, as well as some staff officers from UNTSO HQ in Jerusalem, received the medal.



Medal recipients in MAC House

CHANGES OF COMMAND

Chief Observer Group Golan (OGG):

After one year spent in the mission area the outgoing chief OGG, LtCol Jon Veel from Norway handed over on 25th Jan 2008 the responsibility for the outstation to LtCol Michal Rohleder from Slovakia.

Chief Observer Group Golan Damascus (OGG-D):

The same day, LtCol David Hingston from New Zealand took over the responsibility for the outstation in Damascus from the outgoing chief, LtCol Dermot Cogan from Ireland.

Chief Observer Group Golan Tiberias (OGG-T):

On 20th Mar 2008, the outgoing chief, LtCol Deepak Ghale from the Nepal handed over the responsibility for the outstation in Tiberias to LtCol Carl-Gustav Ebbhagen from Sweden.



COS UNTSO, MGen Ian Gordon and LtCol Deepak Ghale congratulating LtCol Carl-Gustav Ebbhagen

The changes of Command were formalized by the signing of Certificates by the COS UNTSO, MGen Ian Gordon, and the outgoing and incoming Station Chiefs.

Article by Capt Ronald Oliver,

MIO/OGG

Photos by Cdr Egil Holstad,

MPO/OGG-T

St. Patrick's Irish Ball 2008



The Irish Military Observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) celebrated the very famous St. Patrick's Day on 15th Mar 2008. A banquet preceded a great ball which took place in the sumptuous Four Seasons Hotel in Damascus. Among the two hundred and forty guests, MGen David Ashe, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Irish Defense Forces, Mr Gerard Corr, Irish Ambassador to the Syrian Arab Republic, BGen Abdul A. Darwish, Senior Syrian Arab Delegate, MGen Ian Gordon, Chief of Staff UNTSO, and Col Andrzej Ostrowski, Chief of Staff UNDOF attended the party.

Article by Capt Ronald Oliver, MIO/OGG

Photos by Maj Cormac Mangan, OPSO/OGG-D

From Artilleryman to Peacekeeper

It's not so long ago, when artillery was considered as the main armament of every army and superior weapon as well. But things have been changing. Aviation, high accurate weapons or maybe "star wars" have become the most fashionable kind of armament in the world. And what can we do with artillerymen? Let's send them to a peacekeeping mission.

Originally I am a commander of the 2nd firing battery which is equipped with 155 mm self-propelled cannon howitzer 2000 ZUZANA. In 2007 I brought most of my subordinates from the firing battery to the Golan Heights. Maybe it's destiny that my commander here, LtCol Jozef Figura, is also an artilleryman. Furthermore, he is a commander of the mixed self-propelled artillery battalion and my firing battery is part of this battalion. The soldiers from my battery took part in the OP ALTHEA mission until



155 mm self-propelled cannon howitzer 2000 ZUZANA



Austrian cadet during shooting exercise



Howitzer 2000 ZUZANA in action

February 2008. Accomplishing tasks of abroad missions surely enrich and enhance the soldierly experiences of all my soldiers. Although for soldiers whose main tasks are to destroy or to stun, the job in the UNDOF mission is completely different. For this reason the training, in my country, was adapted to meet the mission mandate. It was divided into three phases: First phase included the training of the key staff, second phase the training of all soldiers chosen for this mission and finally in the third phase we were training together with our Austrian colleagues in Götzendorf.

What was the most difficult part of the training? In my opinion the language preparation of subordinates was the most difficult, espe-

cially with the Privates. They haven't had sufficient experience in foreign languages yet and due to this reason it was very difficult to reach an optimal level of readiness for accomplishing tasks for this mission.

What about the future? If fortune stays on our side, my soldiers and I will continue our career as artillerymen of the 2nd firing battery or other artillery units and we will be able to do the job which we like to do.

In closing, artillery is still the Lord of the War and because Saint Barbara protects her sons and daughters, it will always be -

FIRE!

Article and Photos by
Capt Roman Bobal, OiC 3rd Coy/AB





SHELTER -10