

GOLAN

THE UNDOF JOURNAL

50

YEARS IN
THE
SERVICE OF
PEACE ON
THE GOLAN



1974 - 2024

ISSUE NUMBER: 160
MAY | 2024

Letter from the Editor

DEAR READERS

Welcome to the 160th edition of the GOLAN – The UNDOF Journal. It is my privilege to present this special edition on the marking of UNDOF's 50th year contributing to peace on the Golan.

In this edition of the GOLAN, we have replicated content from the soon to be published UNDOF 50 Coffee Table Book. Included here are the messages from Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Department of Peace Operations, General Birame Diop, Military Advisor and Assistant Secretary-General Office of Military Affairs Department of Peace Operations, and our Mission Leadership Team. A short historical perspective on the establishment of the UNDOF mission and some new and varied inputs, reflecting on UNDOF 50, from our current serving UNDOF staff and personnel.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the UNDOF mission support staff and military personnel who have assisted with the UNDOF 50 preparations, events and ceremonies during such a high tempo period for the UNDOF mission. In particular I would like to thank Major Rishav Karki, SO PR – Media Office, who assisted me with all of the background work and administration associated with the ceremonies and events.

Previous editions of the GOLAN and commemorative books were published, marking the 35th and 40th years of the mission. You can find those copies online on the UNDOF mission website. Find the links to these publications at the end of this online magazine.

Commandant Lisa McMahon
Editor in Chief



Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix

The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), a peace operation with a unique mandate and location, plays a critical role in contributing to the stability of the Golan. Born out of the 1974 Agreement on the Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces, UNDOF has remained steadfast in implementing its mandate, employing its best efforts to maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria and to see that it is scrupulously observed, as prescribed by the Agreement.

As we commemorate 50 years of UNDOF's work on the Golan, we pay tribute to the men and women from many countries who have served to implement the important Security Council mandate entrusted to them. The peacekeepers have served with commitment, absolute professionalism, unwavering resolve and efficiency, including under extremely challenging circumstances. Their exemplary service and dedication have contributed to preventing an escalation of the situation across the ceasefire line and preserving the ceasefire, including at times of particular volatility in the region. We salute their contribution to international peace.

I thank the authors of this book for demonstrating through words and images the great work of UNDOF peacekeepers, past and present, who have served with distinction for the cause of international peace.



Jean-Pierre Lacroix
Under-Secretary-
General
United Nations
Department of Peace
Operations

The Military Advisor General Birame Diop

On 31 May 1974, United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 350 (1974) establishing the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). As one of the oldest peacekeeping missions, UNDOF is mandated to maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria; supervise the disengagement of Israeli and Syrian forces; and supervise the areas of separation and areas of limitation.

As we commemorate the 50th anniversary of UNDOF, I would like to recall the critical work of UNDOF in implementing its mandate as prescribed in the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces, including maintaining the ceasefire between them.

I also would like to express my utmost reverence to all fallen peacekeepers, who bravely lost their lives in the line of duty. My heartfelt thanks and recognition also go to the current and past members of UNDOF. Your unwavering commitment, expertise, and tireless work have greatly contributed to the success of UNDOF. I share my further appreciation is to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and its military observers serving in Observer Group Golan for their persistent dedication in supporting the implementation of UNDOF's mandate. I wish to recognize the Troop Contributing Countries in UNDOF for their steadfast support and commitment to it, which remain key factors in the Force's ability to carry out its mandated tasks and contribute to efforts towards peace to the region. I am also thankful to countries contributing military observers to UNTSO.

I offer my profound gratitude to the authors of this book for their invaluable contribution to commemorating this milestone. May this work serve as a lasting tribute to the brave men and women who have dedicated their lives to the cause of peace under the banner of UNDOF and a symbol of hope for a future marked by enduring peace.



Birame Diop
General
(Former) Military Advisor
and
Assistant Secretary-General
Office of Military Affairs
Department of
Peace Operations

Force Commander

As we commemorate five decades of UNDOF's Contribution to the peace in the Golan Heights, it gives me a profound sense of pride and I am filled with immense gratitude to write this message for the UNDOF 50 Book, which proudly showcases the history of UNDOF down the lane since its inception. The journey of UNDOF for the last 50 years has been remarkably marked with the maintenance of ceasefire, and effective implementation of mission mandate by upholding the Disengagement of Force Agreement 1974. At the very outset, I take the opportunity to remember and appreciate all the noble members of the UNDOF, leadership, international and national staff, troops from different countries who contributed to the past and all personnel who continue to serve at the moment for the cause of peace in the Golan. I want to give a special mention and pay tribute to all the fallen UNDOF Members for their gallant service.

UNDOF has always played a crucial role in maintaining the ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic and is continuously devoted to maintaining stability in the region UNDOF has been able to navigate through the most difficult times in it's history in the previous decade. In the five decades of its meaningful existence, thousands of peacekeepers from 24 countries have served this mission with pride. I am profoundly pleased with the dedicated efforts of all peacekeepers and UN personnel affiliated with UNDOF, who, amidst these challenging times, have admirably persisted in accomplishing their duties to help implement the mission mandate with unwavering efficacy.

While the current regional conflict and changing security dynamics continue to influence the situation in the UNDOF AOR, the existence of UNDOF has even greater significance in the present context with the steadfast commitment of the peacekeepers to implement the mandate and prevent the escalation of conflict into the Golan Heights. UNDOF strives to have more meaningful and close coordination with the parties to the agreement to uphold the ceasefire and maintain peace in the Golan Heights. It also takes a great part of the parties to the agreement to have observed restraint and a sensitive approach to prevent escalations. I thank the host nations for their great strides toward upholding the 1974 Agreement.

I want to thank the Observer Group Golan (UNTSO) for their admirable support to UNDOF with their expert military observer to complement the mandate implementation amidst the multiple challenges. UNDOF is very grateful to UN HQ for its continuous support. I take this opportunity to appreciate the mission leadership, all branches, civil staff, men and women in uniform, and all TCCs for your persistence and dedicated contribution.

I would like to thank and compliment the editorial team and those who contributed to publishing this coffee table book to mark the significant milestone of 50 years of the establishment of the UNDOF.



**Lieutenant General
Nirmal Kumar
Thapa
Force Commander
& Head of Mission
UNDOF**

Deputy Force Commander

As the Deputy Force Commander, and as a fellow peacekeeper who is immensely proud of United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), a 'Force for Peace in Golan', I take this opportunity to felicitate and commend all our UNDOF staff and personnel, past and present, for their invaluable contribution to this unique mission".

This edition of Golan journal coincides with 50th Anniversary of our unique mission, which has been a saga of courage, sacrifice, and resilience displayed by our brave peacekeepers and dives into the rich history and indomitable spirit of UNDOF over past five decades. This mission has been a testimony to the perseverance and motivation of men and women who uphold the UN values for ever lasting peace and stability in the Golan region.

While looking towards the future of UN Peacekeeping in myriad conflict zones across the globe, it's important to be prepared for new challenges and opportunities and keep our peacekeeping dynamic and relevant, adapting to the evolving complexities. I am confident that with our collective strength and determination, we will continue to uphold our mandate by our steadfast belief in peacekeepers' values and ethos, actively supported by our International and National staff.



**Brigadier General
Amitabh Jha
Deputy Force
Commander
UNDOF**

Chief Mission Support

While UNDOF has always been a military mission, I would like to pay tribute to all the civilian staff both the International Staff and our National Staff Colleagues based in both Camp Four and Camp Ziouani. UNDOF was born after the 1973 War to maintain peace on the Golan and since its establishment the civilian support staff have been the foundation upon which military operations of the Mission have been based.

From building a Mission on the battlefields of 1973, through the calmer periods and into the more unstable period of the current generation, including the relocation to Camp Ziouani and the reoccupation of Camp Four, the national staff have provided constant support in providing critical communications and IT, managing facilities and construction projects, maintaining the vehicle fleet, providing critical fuel and rations and sharing local cultural knowledge and guidance to the wonderful region that is their home. We would also remember that the soldiers are much happier when they receive their Daily Allowance and MSA!!!

Turning to the international staff, some have been ex-military who having served as troops with the UN, including former UNDOF TCCs, some have been national staff in other Missions, others have just wanted to use their expertise in the service of Peace. All of them have come to UNDOF from all the continents across the Globe to share their expertise and provide essential continuity, memory and knowledge, to a Force that has a 100% rotation, every 12 months.

We must also remember and thank all our friends and supporters who are not UNDOF staff, be they Liaison Officers, contractors, cleaners, kitchen helpers and the wonderful medical staff of the local hospitals who take care of the seriously ill UNDOF personnel who are referred to them and all our colleagues who have served as desk officers at HQ.

So to all the current and former civilian staff, pensioners and all those who will keep supporting UNDOF in the next phases of its distinguished history, please accept my deepest thanks and congratulations!!!



Bernard Lee
Chief Mission Support
UNDOF

Chief of Staff

On this 50th commemoration, I pay tribute to the unwavering commitment and tireless efforts of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). For half a century, UNDOF has been a beacon of hope, bridging divides and safeguarding peace in a region marked by historical tensions. Throughout this period, the dedicated military and civilian staff in the Golan have demonstrated steadfast commitment and professionalism. This has seen the fulfillment of the mission's mandate.

As guardians of peace, UNDOF has patrolled the rugged terrain, our presence, a testament to diplomacy over discord. Amidst rocky outcrops and windswept plateaus, we have upheld the fragile peace, ensuring that the echoes of war remain distant memories. Our dedication transcends borders and politics and is a commitment to humanity itself. We must ensure that the legacy of UNDOF endures and that future generations are inspired to carry forward the torch of peacekeeping with the same passion and determination.

Through challenges and triumphs, UNDOF has evolved. From sporadic skirmishes to regional tensions, the mission has navigated treacherous waters. Yet, through it all, we, the peacekeepers have stood firm. We have facilitated communication, defused tensions, and provided a lifeline of hope to communities caught in the crossfire. As a beacon of hope, UNDOF continues implementing its mandate with doggedness. As we commemorate this golden milestone, let us reflect on the lives touched by UNDOF. Shepherds tending their flock, farmers tilling their fields, children attending schools, and families rebuilding their lives. These are the silent beneficiaries of peace. Their laughter, dreams, and resilience are woven into the fabric of UNDOF's legacy.

As I look ahead, the challenges persist, but the winds of change continue to blow across the Golan Heights, and UNDOF remains steadfast. As we reflect on 50 years of service, let us also project and envision a future where dialogue triumphs over discord, olive branches replace guns, and the Golan symbolizes reconciliation. Let us use this milestone as an opportunity to renew our dedication to the principles of the United Nations and work together toward a future where conflict is replaced by understanding and peace prevails.

With gratitude and commitment to the brave men and women of UNDOF and UNTSO (OGG), I express my deepest gratitude. Your sacrifices, your courage, and your unwavering commitment inspire many. May the next 50 years be marked by continued dedication, resilience, and the pursuit of lasting peace.

Together, let us honor the legacy of UNDOF—a legacy etched in the annals of peacekeeping history.



Colonel William Northey
Chief Of Staff
UNDOF

CONTENTS

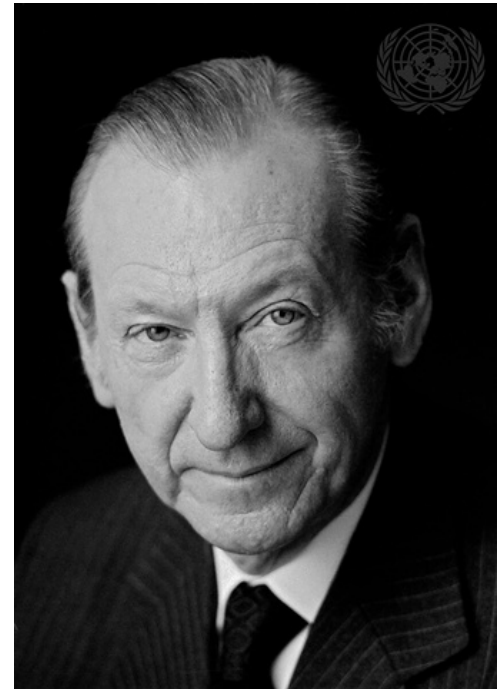
ARTICLE	PAGES
Letter from the Editor	1
UNDOF 50 Forewords	2 – 7
Historical Perspective	9 – 16
50 years of UNDOF by Wolfgang Jilke, Maj Gen (ret'd) FC from 2007 –2010	17 – 19
UNDOF Photographs	21 – 24
50Years of Memories – Poem, Gloria Cusack Time	25
My UNDOF Journey – Nibal Al-fahel “Bana”	26
CSO Ms. Sunita Sharma’s UNDOF JOURNEY	27 – 28
UNDOF Quick Impact Projects	29 – 31
Mapping Peace, GIS in UNDOF	32 – 34
Preservation of Truce (Peace) in Golan and Conservation of the Black-Necked Cranes in Phobjikha, Bhutan	35 – 37
Links to previous UNDOF commemorative Books and GOLAN – The UNDOF Journal	38

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

On 6 October 1973, war erupted in the Middle East between Egyptian and Israeli forces in the Suez Canal area and the Sinai, and between Israeli and Syrian forces in the Golan Heights. On 24 October, as fighting between Egypt and Israel reached a critical stage, the Security Council decided to set up a second United Nations Emergency Force II (UNEF II). The Force was immediately moved into place between the Israeli and Egyptian armies in the Suez Canal area, and its arrival effectively stabilized the situation. However, no new peace keeping operation at that time was established on the Syrian front.

In the Israel-Syria sector tension remained high, and from March 1974 the situation became increasingly unstable. In the background, diplomatic initiatives were being devised, which resulted in the conclusion of an Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces [S/11302/Add.1, annexes I and II].

On the 30th May 1974, the United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim provided the Security Council with the text of the Agreement, and its Protocol, which called for a United Nations force to supervise the implementation of the Agreement. On 31 May, the Security Council passed resolution 350, which called for the creation of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). The UNDOF mandate reads:



Kurt Waldheim
Former Secretary-General
United Nations

“Under the Security Council Resolution 350 (1974) of 31 May 1974, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was established to; maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria, supervise the disengagement of Israeli and Syrian Forces, and to supervise the Area of Separation (AOS) and Area of Limitation (AOL).”

Step towards a just and lasting peace' ISRAEL-SYRIA DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT

Text of agreement to be signed in Geneva today.

A. Israel and Syria will scrupulously observe the cease-fire on land, sea and air and will refrain from all military actions against each other, from the time of the signing of this document, in implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 333 dated October 22, 1973.

B. The military forces of Israel and Syria will be separated in accordance with the following principles:

1. All Israeli military forces will be west of the line designated as Line A on the map attached hereto, except in the Kuneitra area where they will be west of Line A-1.

2. All territory east of Line A will be under Syrian administration, and Syrian civilians will return to this territory.

3. The area between Line A and the Line designated as Line B on the attached map will be an area of separation. In this area will be stationed the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force established in accordance with the accompanying protocol.

4. All Syrian military forces will be east of the line designated as Line B on the attached map.

5. There will be two equal areas of limitation in armament and forces, one west of Line A and one east of Line B as agreed upon.

6. Air forces of the two sides will be permitted to operate up to their respective lines without interference from the other side.

C. In the area between Line A and Line A-1 on the attached map there shall be no military forces.

D. This agreement and the attached map will be signed by the military representatives of Israel and Syria in Geneva not later than May 31, 1974, in the Egyptian-Israeli military working group of the Geneva Peace Conference under the aegis of the United Nations, after that group has been joined by a Syrian military representative, and with the participation of representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union. The precise delineation of the disengagement of forces will be worked out by military representatives of Israel and Syria in the Egyptian-Israeli military working group who will agree on the stages of this process. The military working group described above will start their work for this purpose in Geneva under the aegis of the United Nations within 24 hours after the signing of this agreement. They will complete this task within five days. Disengagement will begin with a

working group. The process of disengagement will be completed not later than twenty days after it begins.

E. The provisions of paragraphs A, B and C shall be inspected by personnel of the United Nations comprising the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force under this agreement.

F. Within 24 hours after the signing of this agreement in Geneva all wounded prisoners of war which each side holds of the other, as certified by the ICRC will be repatriated. The morning after the completion of the task of the military working group all remaining prisoners of war will be repatriated.

G. The bodies of all dead soldiers held by either side will be returned for burial in their respective countries within 10 days after the signing of this agreement.

H. This agreement is not a peace agreement. It is a step toward a just and durable peace on the basis of Security Council resolution 333 dated October 22, 1973.

Protocol concerning the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force.

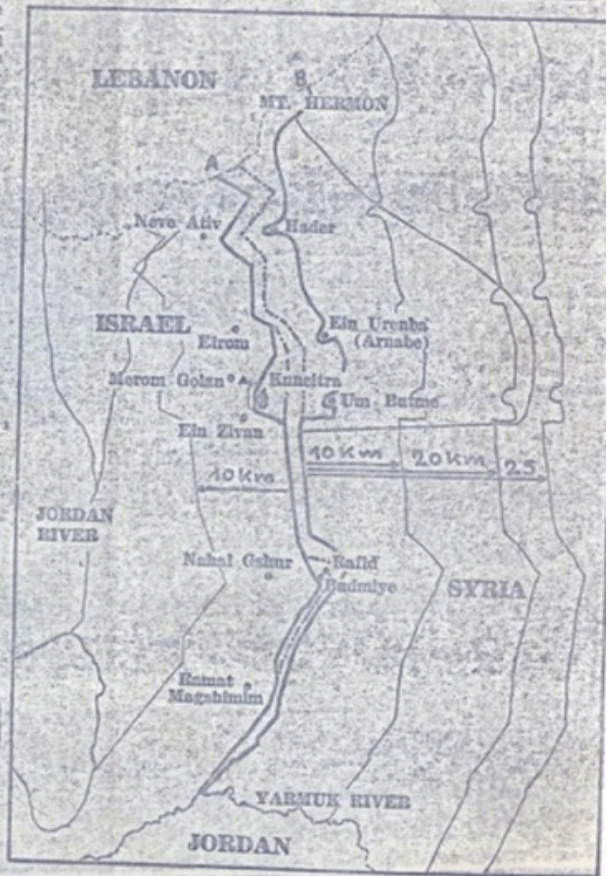
Israel and Syria agree that:

The function of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (Undof) under the agreement will be to use its best efforts to maintain the cease-fire and to see that it is scrupulously observed. It will supervise the agreement and protocol thereto with regard to the areas of separation and limitation. In carrying out its mission, it will comply with generally applicable Syrian laws and regulations and will not hamper the functioning of local civil administration. It will enjoy freedom of movement and communication and other facilities that are necessary for its mission. It will be mobile and provided with personal weapons of a defensive character and shall use such weapons only in self-defence. The number of the Undof shall be about 1,200, who will be selected by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in consultation with the parties from members of the United Nations who are not permanent members of the Security Council.

The Undof will be under the command of the United Nations, vested in the Secretary-General, under the authority of the Security Council.

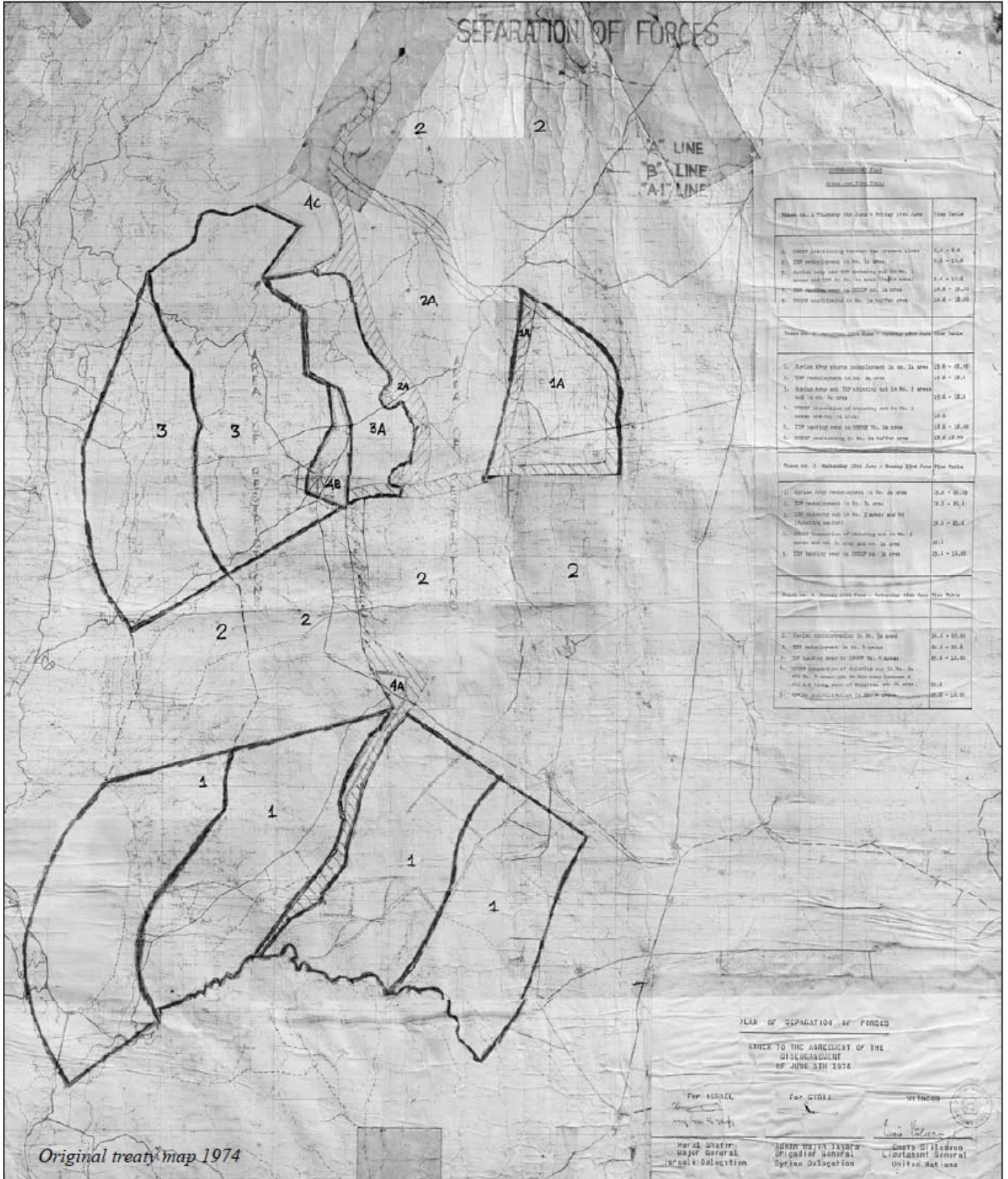
The Undof shall carry out inspections under the agreement, and report thereon to the parties on a regular basis, not less often than once every fifteen days, and, in addition, when requested by either party. It shall mark on the ground the respective lines shown on the map attached to the agreement.

Israel and Syria will support a resolution of the United Nations Security Council which will provide for the Undof contemplated by the agreement. The initial authorization will be for six months subject



Newspaper cutting 31 May 1974

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE



The Original Treaty Map 1974



The first convoy from the Sinai

UNDOF was set up with a six-month mandate, subject to concurrence from the Security Council, Israel and Syria. Its role was to supervise the disengagement of Israeli and Syrian forces, and then maintain the ceasefire, and supervise the Agreement and Protocol with respect to the areas of limitation and separation. UNDOF personnel were to comply with Syrian laws and regulations and not hamper the local Syrian civil authorities. UNDOF personnel were to enjoy freedom of movement and communication, and were only permitted to carry the firearms necessary for self-defence.

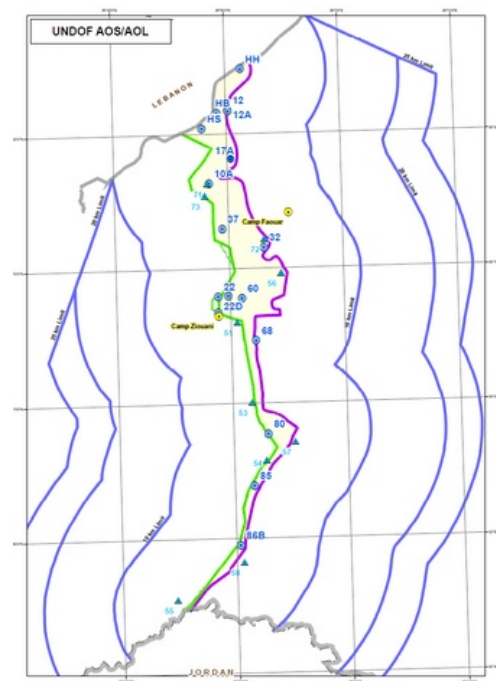
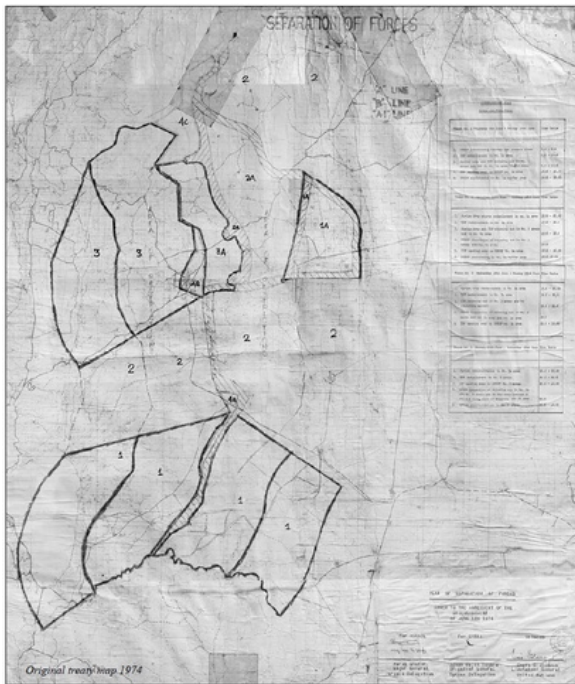
The Agreement established an area of separation and an area of limitation. The former is a demilitarized zone controlled by UNDOF, approximately 80 km long and from 200m wide in the south to 8 km wide in the north. The latter is an area of Israeli or Syrian territory in which the number and type of military personnel and equipment is restricted. The Agreement also allows Syrian civilians to return to their homes in the area of separation.

The initial UNDOF elements from Austria started to arrive on 3 June 1974, followed the next day by elements drawn from the Canadian and Polish logistics units of UNEF II.

The 1200 strong force became operational on 6 June 1974. By 26 June the four phases of the disengagement agreement had been completed smoothly and on schedule, and the new UN force had taken up positions in a buffer zone extending from Mount Hermon in the north to the Jordanian border in the south. The force was made up of some 90 observers from the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), which has been serving in the area since the truce of 1948, and some 500 Austrians, 350 Peruvians and 250 Canadian and Polish logistics personnel.

Once in place, UNDOF's observers were quickly employed observing the disengagement of the two forces, which occurred between 14 and 27 June. UNDOF undertook the delineation and marking of the boundaries to the area of separation. This was completed by July 1974. Checkpoints and observation posts were also established, with two base camps, one on either side of the area of separation.

THE AREAS OF SEPARATION AND LIMITATION



The Area of Separation is 80 km long and varies in width from 10 km in the center to less than 200m in the furthest point in the South. The AOL has three zones, 0-10km; 10 - 20km km; and 20 - 25km wide. UNDOF ensures that that the agreed limitations in armaments and forces are being observed in these areas. The terrain is hilly and is dominated in the North by Mt Hermon, the highest permanently manned UN position sitting at an altitude of 2,814 m. The AOS is delineated and marked on the ground by barrel lines.

THE BARREL LINES

The Area of Separation is marked on the ground by barrels placed along the Alpha and Bravo lines. UNDOF carries out maintenance on these barrels as they are degraded by the climatic conditions. The most recent refurbishment was in 2023.



UNDOF OPERATIONS - CORE TASKS

UNDOF uses UN Positions, Observation Posts (OPs) as well as foot and mobile patrols to carry out its mandated tasks. Patrols keep to established paths and roads due to the threat of unexploded ordnance and mines. Observer Group Golan (OGG) unarmed observers, under operational control of UNDOF, carry out fortnightly inspections of each side's military forces in the AOL.



UNDOF assisted in humanitarian operations. From time to time in the initial stages of the mission, UNDOF arranged the transfer of prisoners of war and the bodies of those who died in the war between Israel and Syria. For a period from 1976 to 1982 UNDOF supervised the periodic reunion of Druze families who were separated by the border running through the area of separation.

Although there have been some major incidents over the past 50 years, UNDOF has been successful in resolving problems along the border between occupied Golan and Syria. There have been occasional restrictions placed on UNDOF's operations, however, these have not seriously hindered UNDOF's effectiveness.

UNDOF TIMELINE 1974 – 2024



1974 – Contingents from Austria, Peru, Poland and Canada were deployed from UNEF II in Sinai to UNDOF Syria.

1975 – The outgoing Peruvian Contingent handed over their taskings to the Iranian Contingent.

1979 – The Finnish Battalion was deployed to the Golan and replaced the outgoing Iranian Battalion.

1993 – Poland redeployed to Golan and replaced the Finnish Battalion.

1996 – Japanese Contingent joined Canada to form LOGBATT.

1998 – Slovakia replaced 3rd Coy in AUSBATT.

2006 – In March, the Indian Contingent replaced Canada.

2008 – Croatia replaced Slovakia.

2009 – Phillipines replaced Poland.

2011 – Syrian Civil War begins.

2013 – Austria departs the UNDOF mission. Fiji, Nepal and Ireland deploy.

2014 – UNDOF HQ re-deploys to CZ. The Philippine Contingent departs UNDOF.

2015 - Czech Republic and Bhutan Staff Officers deploy to the UNDOF mission.

2016 - Camp Faouar is reoccupied by a small number of troops. This commenced the incremental reoccupation on the B side.

2017 - Ghana deploys staff officers to UNDOF.

2018 - UNDOF reoccupied Camp Faouar and other UNDOF locations on the Bravo Side of the Golan.

2019 - Uruguay contingent and Australian Staff Officers deploy to UNDOF.

2020 - COVID 19 Pandemic - UNDOF continues operations following strict guidelines.

2022 - Argentina and Zambia deploy staff officers to UNDOF.

2023 - Republic of Korea deploys a Staff Officer to UNDOF.

2024 - Kazakhstan deploys to UNDOF. Ireland Force Reserve Company departs.

2024 - UNDOF marks 50 years in the service of peace on the Golan Heights



50 years of UNDOF by Wolfgang Jilke, Maj Gen (ret'd)

FC from 2007 – 2010

A remarkable anniversary!
50 years of peacekeeping in a special crisis region of the world.
Half a century of loyal and dedicated service.
All truly reasons enough to celebrate but also to reflect.
Looking back is therefore the right thing to do.

I have known UNDOF for many years. As a young lieutenant in 1974, serving in the Austrian UN-Battalion in UNEF 2, I took part in the transfer from Egypt, up to the Golan Heights. We arrived there as the first UN soldiers in the mission area. We faced a real pioneering time indeed. The very first weeks of the disengagement kept us busy 24 hours a day. The following period of establishing the buffer zone was similarly demanding. There was hardly any free time, no recreation, little infrastructure (except for the soldiers in the camp, we all lived for months in tents), no connection to home (Internet, WhatsApp, Facebook, telephone, all that didn't exist at that time), only letters from home arrived sometimes with enormous delay. But what we did have was an incredible camaraderie and a sense of togetherness. Unfortunately, on the last day of the disengagement we also had the first losses from a mine accident on the road up to Mount Hermon.



The first convoy from the Sinai



Camp Faouar 1974



Mount Hermon in the early stage of UNDOF



Annual commemorative ceremony at the location where a motorized patrol hit a mine in 1974

A few years later, in 1989, I had the opportunity to join UNDOF again as a DCOS. How much the Force, the situation and the general circumstances had changed. There was permanent accommodation, television, and the opportunity to travel around and visit historical sites in the region. The threat was low, and the Force appeared sometimes rather as an assembly of soldiers of many nations on the Golan in peace times than a UN Force on a mission. In addition, UNDOF unfortunately had some incidents, such as gasoline smuggling and the illegal sale of duty-free goods. As a result, UNDOF has lost much of the basic essential right of freedom of movement.

There were now gates at the A Line which affected UNDOF freedom of movement. Years later in 2007, when I was offered the opportunity to return to UNDOF as Force Commander I immediately accepted. Again, the Force and the situation had changed. The constriction of UNDOF by the host nations had increased further. The Force itself had apparently got used to it and had given up attempts to change this. Also, the political situation had changed. There was a permanent tension between the Host nations which showed up in frequent violations which always carried the risk of escalation.

My efforts were therefore aimed at adapting UNDOF to the changed situation. One very important decision was made in the cooperation between UNDOF and UNTSO. The then COS UNTSO, MGEN Ian Johnson and I made a similar assessment, that in the event of an escalation, it was impossible for Jerusalem to lead and supply OGG. We therefore agreed to put OGG under a kind of operational control of UNDOF.



The monitoring of the buffer zone was intensified, night patrols were ordered and the forces in the buffer zone were also educated to perform their tasks in a more mobile way. In addition to official inspections OGG was tasked to frequently patrol the Area of Limitation and identify early changes, especially in the civilian population. The protection of the soldiers had top priority. Around the positions in the buffer zone, stone walls were constructed to avoid at least the impact of infantry weapons from outside. To protect our patrols South African RG32M APC were procured by UNDOF.



RG32M patrols on the Quneitra road

The fundamental operational concept of mission fulfilment was the Force's reliability and the capability for rapid response in crises. Even the smallest sparks had to be snuffed out early. A late reaction overwhelmed most likely UNDOF's capacity. All this increased the credibility and the reputation of UNDOF within the authorities of the host nations. This helped also to lift some of the restrictions UNDOF was suffering from.

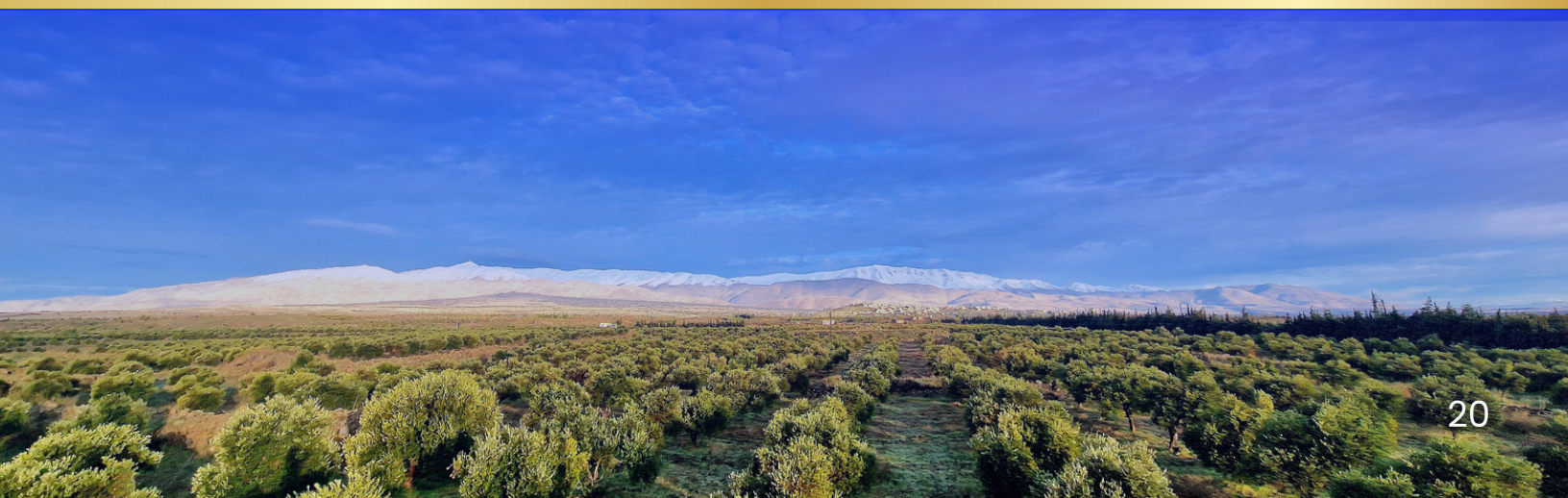
Overall, I believe, that after my 3 years as a FC I was passing on the Force to my successor in a commendable state. Reflecting on the past, UNDOF has consistently achieved the given goals and targets. Despite significant shifts in the operational framework and political landscape, soldiers from numerous nations have done a great job.

For the future, I extend my best wishes for UNDOF's continued success.
Good luck!!!!



**Maj Gen
Wolfgang Gilke
Austria**

Since 1974 a total of 24 Troop Contributing Countries have served on the Golan with UNDOF



UNDOF 50 COMMEMORATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS MAY 2024



UNDOF Mission Leadership Team and the Mission Support Staff



UNDOF Mission Leadership Team and the HQ Staff Officers



UNDOF Mission Leadership Team and the Telemedicine Team

UNDOF 50 Parade Camp Faouar 22 May 2024



UNDOF 50 Parade Camp Ziouani 28 May 2024



"On the 31st of May 1974 the United Nations Security Council passed resolution 350, which called for the creation of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)."



INTERNATIONAL PEACE KEEPERS DAY 29 MAY 2024

Fit for the
future
Building better
together



INTERNATIONAL DAY
OF UN PEACEKEEPERS
29 MAY 2024 UNDOF
Camp Ziouani, Golan

Fit for the
future
Building better
together



INTERNATIONAL DAY
OF UN PEACEKEEPERS
29 MAY 2024 UNDOF
Camp Faouar, Golan

50 YEARS OF MEMORIES



**IT HAS BEEN 50 YEARS SINCE YOUR ESTABLISHMENT
50 YEARS OF MEMORIES, UP'S AND DOWN'S
MEMORIES OF THOSE WHO HAVE BRAVELY SERVED BEFORE
AND SOME WHO HAVE GONE THROUGH WARS**

**BROWSING THROUGH OLD PHOTOS OF YOU
IT AMAZES ME ON HOW STRONG YOU CAME THROUGH
FROM THE BARE LOOKING CAMPS WITH NO FENCE OR WALL
TO WHAT NOW YOU HAVE A SMALL CITY OF ITS OWN**

**I REMEMBER WHEN UNDOF MARKED ITS FORTIETH
DIDN'T KNOW THAT YOU WILL STILL BE HERE FOR THE FIFTIETH
SOME TOUGHEST TIMES IN THE LAST TEN YEARS
SOME GOOD MEMORIES TO KEEP WITHOUT ANY FEAR**

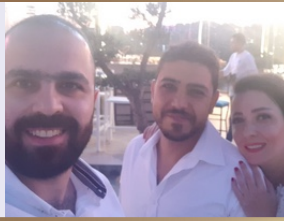
**MAINTAINING THE CEASEFIRE IS PART OF YOUR MANDATE
SUPERVISE THE DISENGAGEMENT, AREAS OF SEPARATION AND LIMITATION
YOU HAVE BEEN A PILLAR STANDING WITH PRIDE
OBSERVING AND MONITORING! OH YES, I KNOW THERE WERE NO EASY RIDES**

**IF ANYTHING I WOULD SAY I AM PROUD ON HOW FAR YOU HAVE COME
A MILESTONE THAT OTHER MISSIONS ARE ENVY ABOUT
50 YEARS CONTRIBUTING TO PEACE**

**GLORIA J.TIME-CUSACK
AREA SECURITY OFFICER**



My UNDOF Journey



Throughout my 17 years of working at UNDOF, I have faced many challenges one of the most overwhelming moments was to say goodbye to colleagues from different contingents as well as bid farewell to many civilian colleagues.



However, it also reminded me of the impact we can have on each other's lives and the importance of cherishing every moment we have together.



I have always found strength in the rich and multicultural environment that allowed me to grow both personally and professionally and I am grateful for the opportunity to pursue a lot of my dreams.



During my tenure here I had the chance to own my first car, had my two daughters, and earned my degree in psychology and a lot more.



Despite both happy and sad memories, I consider my colleagues to be like a family and will always cherish the time I spent in UNDOF.

**Nibal Al-fahel "Bana"
Syrian National Staff**



CSO Ms Sunita Sharma's UNDOF JOURNEY



Security Adviser/CSO Ms.Sunita Sharma – at work at her office in Camp Faouar.

The past two years working in the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) as the Security Adviser/CSO has been fulfilling and rewarding despite the several challenges we are facing. Our situation here doesn't just affect the UNDOF AOR but on the regional and world peace as well. In recent events, there has been an increase in operational tempo and so much is expected of us. UNDOF's mandate is to supervise the ceasefire between Israel and Syria on the Golan, ensuring the disengagement of their respective forces.

Over the past five decades, UNDOF has played a crucial role in preventing escalation and maintaining stability in the region. As the Chief Security Officer, I acknowledge the roles performed by the past and present Security Officers both national and international that helped us accomplish UNDOF's mission and mandate with the various stakeholders. With our internal and external engagements, we were able achieve the objective set to us by the Force Commander / Designated Official and the UNDOF leadership.



Security Adviser /CSO Ms. Sunita Sharma – conducts regular area/route visits. Here, she is in one of the UNDOF Positions in the RM area B-South, having a briefing discussion with the Position Commander from Uruguay.

CSO Ms Sunita Sharma's UNDOF JOURNEY



DSS staff area/route recce in Mount Hermon.
In UN Position Hermon Hotel.

Our job requires the highest standard and quality and there's no room for mediocrity because we are here to protect the lives of UNSMS personnel/assets in order for our organization to proceed with our operations and carry on with our duties more efficiently and effectively. As we look ahead into the future, I am inspiring my own team to stay focused on the mission and for us to work together because it is only in unity that we achieve strength. I wish to commend all UNDOF staff and personnel on this the 50th year of contributing to peace on the Golan.



Security Adviser/CSO Ms. Sunita Sharma conducted regular area/route recce in UNDOF A-side. Here she visited UNTSO-OGGT OP and having a briefing/discussion with an UNTSO-OGG Military Observer from Bhutan.

The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) support the Syrian community in the Golan Heights through the implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs).

Situated between Syria and Israel for the past fifty years, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) has done a remarkable work. The Force has managed to maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria; supervise the disengagement of Israeli and Syrian forces; and oversee the areas of separation and limitation as written in the Disengagement Agreement of May 1974. This observation has contributed to de-escalation and the maintaining of peace in the region and more specifically between the two nations. In order to reinforce and improve its relationship with the community, UNDOF thought it was imperative to introduce the QIPs program to the communities that were devastated by the war. Many schools were destroyed, and it was difficult for children to return to school, difficult for some communities to access potable drinking water and for others to get health care. All this fell within the framework of the population-centered approach. The different UNDOF contingents including the communities and the authorities are involved in the implementation of the QIPs. The goal is to be receptive and responsive to the needs and values of the host population.



The quick impact projects were introduced to UNDOF in 2019. Since then, a total of 25 projects have been carried out. The Mission has supported and continued to support the local authorities in meeting the most urgent needs of their communities either by rehabilitating and equipping schools, hospitals, health care centers, playground, and parks, or by providing potable drinking water in some communities.

We saw the smile on the face of a 10-year-old girl, while we were visiting her school that was renovated 3 years ago in 2021. She told us: "Before the renovation, our school didn't have any windows, the roof was leaking, the floor was cracked on the outside, there was no water and no fence around the school to protect us. I was feeling very insecure, and my classroom was very cold. After the renovation, I felt more secure, and I was more willing to stay in class. I am very grateful to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force".



We are also delighted to share with you the testimony of a woman from the Harfa Village who explained to us on April the 23rd, 2024, how the construction of a water well in Harfa helped to improve the consumption and quality of water in her village. "Before the construction of the water well project in Harfa, it was very difficult for the population to have access to potable drinking water. We had to travel several kilometers to look for water and had to store a portion of it to use for the next 20 days. After the realization of the project, water was no longer an issue for a part of our community. In the name of my community and all the women; I would like to convey our gratitude to UNDOF". The community in their collective efforts have contributed to bringing water to their homes; an initiative applauded by UNDOF as we can see below.



War is the most devastating thing that can happen to a community. It contributes to distancing communities from each other, as well as creating a gap between local authorities and their populations who often find it impossible to rebuild infrastructure and deliver basic services and needs to their taxpayers.

The QIPs carried out by UNDOF served as a catalyst to bring the communities together and contributed to rebuild trust between local authorities and their populations.



**MARIE-ROSE FERNANDE G.
ALEXANDRE,
CIVIL AFFAIRS OFFICER
UNDOF**

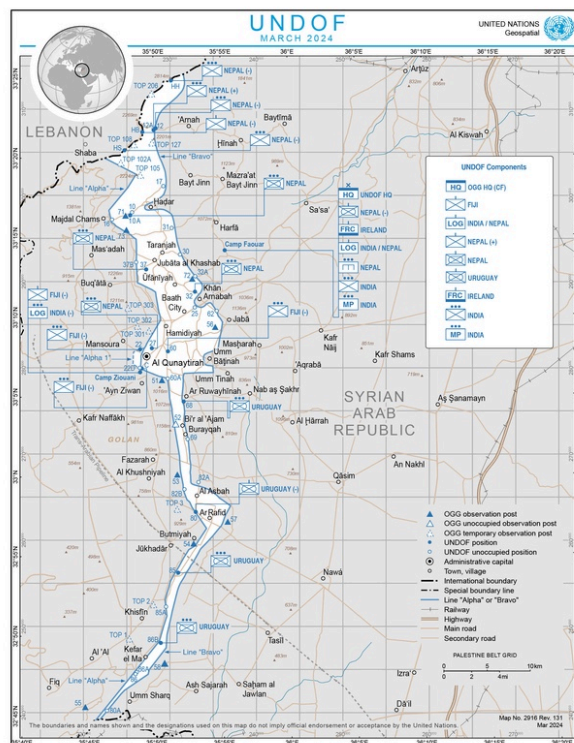


Mapping Peace, GIS in UNDOF

Geospatial technology plays a crucial role in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations. Since its introduction in 2002, GIS has demonstrated a positive impact in various areas namely military operational planning, situational awareness, boundary demarcation, conflict analysis, and monitoring. GIS has been assisting the peacekeepers by enhancing safety and security of personnel serving in challenging and remote environments.



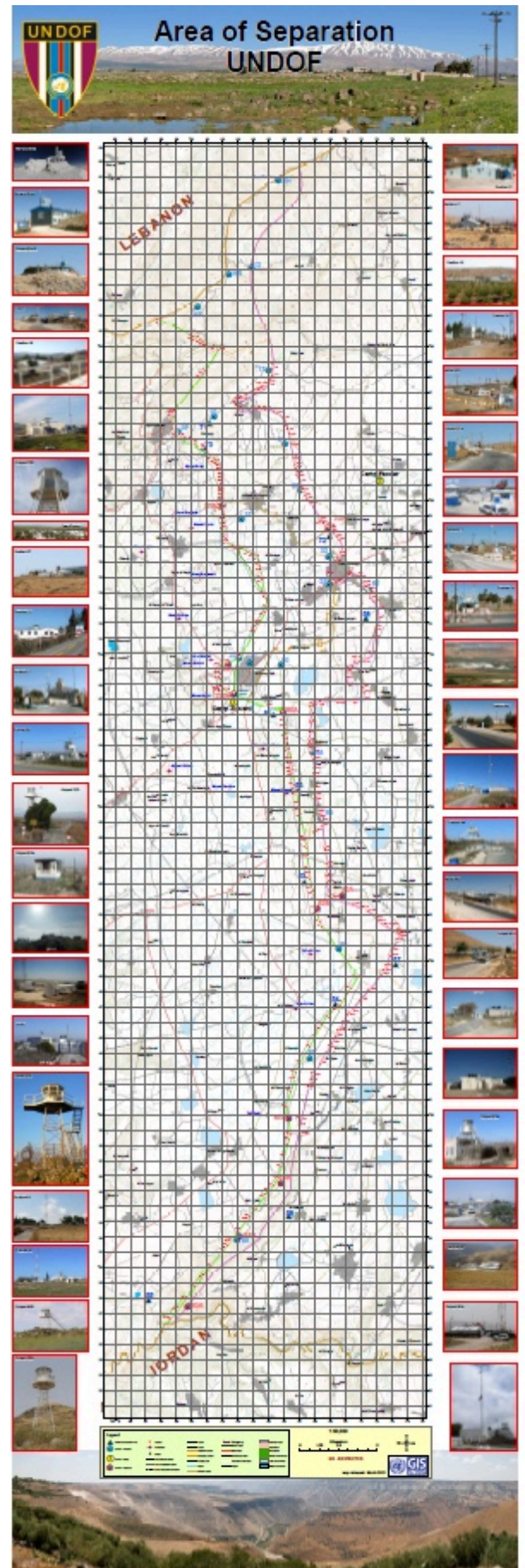
GIS in UNDOF has been actively involved through its long history in assisting the mission in the fulfilment of its mandate. The Geospatial unit has been engaged in tasks varying from creation of maps as per the requirements of the mission to providing field geospatial services. UNDOF GIS is a small cohesive unit led by the GIS Chief Mr Yuriy Gvozd and Staff Officer Mapping currently Lt Col Shashank Thite.



Deployment Map March 2024

UNDOF GIS has utilized the field of Geospatial science for extending the undermentioned support to the mission:

1. **Situational Awareness.** GIS enabled dynamic visualization of mission area thereby assisting peacekeepers in a better assimilation of the terrain, infrastructure, and potential threats.
2. **Operational Planning.** GIS assists the MLT for mission planning, troop deployment, and logistics.
3. **Boundary Demarcation.** GIS plays key role in defining borders and resolving territorial disputes.
4. **Conflict Analysis.** Spatial data helps analyze conflict dynamics, identify hotspots and plan interventions.
5. **Humanitarian Aid.** GIS aids in disaster response, refugee management, and resource allocation.
6. **Capacity Building.** Training peacekeepers in GIS skills and Map Reading.
7. **Data Sharing.** The GIS unit also provides support to neighboring UN Missions thereby working cohesively in an integrated environment encouraging geospatial data collaboration.



Map of the UNDOF AOS

8. **Innovation Ecosystem.** GIS also leveraging external expertise and technologies enhancing the mission capabilities by provision of latest satellite imagery for conflict resolution and fulfilment of mission mandate.



GIS is not just a tool, it's a strategic asset for UN peacekeeping. By embracing open geospatial innovation, GIS UNDOF has enhanced mission's effectiveness, improved safety and contributed to global peace and stability.



Lt Col Shashank Thite
SSO GIS OFFICER
UNDOF

PRESERVATION OF TRUCE (PEACE) IN GOLAN AND CONSERVATION OF BLACK-NECKED CRANES IN PHOBJIKHA, BHUTAN



There is nothing in the world that can measure up to the preciousness of peace.

This is my maiden UN Mission and my maiden trip to the middle east. As the shuttle car crossed the border of Lebanon and Syria, we were driving through a wide plain made up of brownish molten rocks and at the far-left side I could see snowcapped hills. Seeing the snowcapped hills, frantically I checked the altitude of the place, and it showed 160 meters on my mobile compass app. Then I started to wonder how the snow is formed. The view of the landscape that was unfolding with every mile was vividly bringing back the image of a famous tourist location in my country called Phobjikha Valley, which is three hours car drive from the capital Thimphu towards eastern Bhutan.

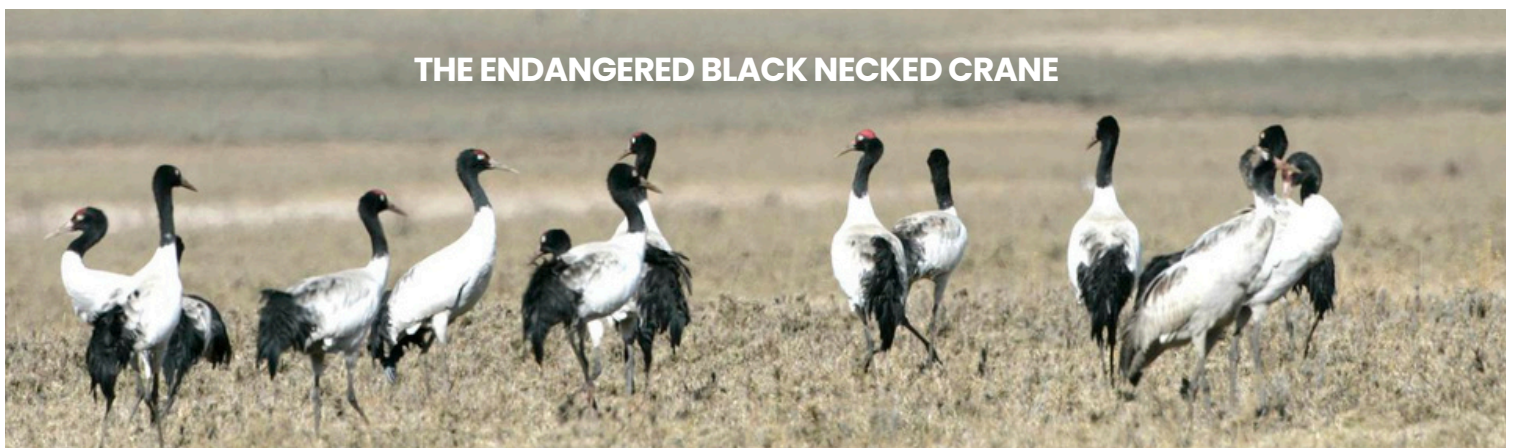


I observed similarities between the Golan and the Phobjikha valley, especially in landscape, and in a way a comparison of the mandate of UNDOF with that of conservation efforts of the endangered Black-necked cranes in Phojikha Valley. Where in the Phojikha Valley efforts focus on conserving a rare precious species and on the Golan efforts focus on conserving peace, a precious thing in itself. I can repeat my opening statement that there is nothing more precious than peace in this world.



The panoramic view of Golan resembles the wide plains flanked by a hill range on one side with that of Phobjikha valley except Phobjikha is flanked by two forested mountains on both sides, also it is smaller in size, and its plains remain green most of the seasons except in winter it turns brown due to cold weather. Unlike Phobjikha, Golan grow plenty of olive plants which I suppose are the cash crops and apples are grown at the base of the snowcapped hills.

From the mandate point of view, UNDOF is meant for preservation of peace while Phobjikha is a place for the conservation of endangered Black-necked cranes. Phobjikha valley is one of the major wintering grounds for the cranes, which migrate from Tibet to Bhutan in winter months. Mindful of the depleting numbers of the Black-necked cranes in the world, Bhutan has implemented several efforts towards the conservation works including habitat conservation and legislating the conservation policy and legislation in the year 2003 with an endeavor to increase the number of cranes to balance the ecological system. Since then, the number of black necked cranes frequenting Phobjikha is on the rise. Each year there is a festival dedicated to Black-necked cranes which is held in the vicinity of the Phobjikha Valley. It not only creates awareness to the local people, but it also attracts lots of tourists.



UNDOF was established back in 1974 with the mandate to act as pacifier between the two countries to monitor that two sides stick to the agreement drawn and to achieve enduring peace in the region. In May 2024, this year UNDOF completes 50 years of its establishment, and it is a testament of UNDOF for upholding the mandate for such long years that has resulted in the contribution to peace on the Golan for this time. Grateful to all the past UNDOF members. Indeed, it's a collective success thus far of the member countries under United Nations developed nations rendering financial support and the developing nations contributing troops.

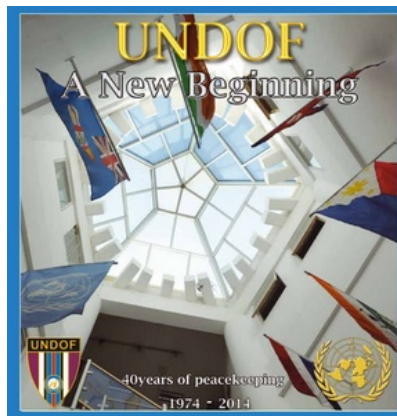
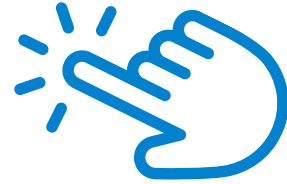
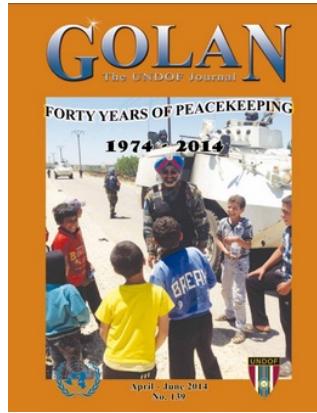


**MAJOR KUENZANG WANGDI
SO PLANNING
UNDOF**

Scan the QR code or click/tap on the image below



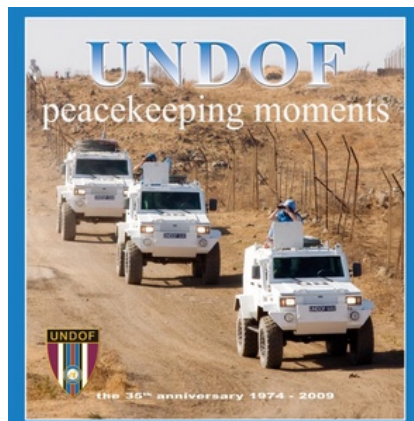
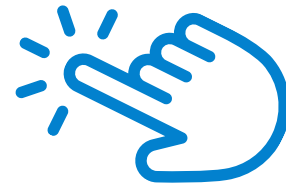
40 Years GJ



40 Years Book



35 Years GJ



35 Years Book

1974



2024

**50 YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF
PEACE ON THE GOLAN**

