

# BLUE BERET

## Intensive training for new UNFICYP military and civilian liaison officers

One of UNFICYP's key roles is to resolve incidents in the buffer zone at the lowest level through negotiation; liaison officers, whose main goal is to establish and maintain good relationships with their counterparts to solve the incidents by peaceful means, are a key element in the successful execution of this role. As such, with every new troop rotation, thorough training for Military Observer and Liaison Officers (MOLO) and Sector Civil Affairs and Military Liaison Officers (SCAMLO) is critical.

This year, UNFICYP HQ organized the MOLO/SCAMLO training course at the UNPA between 29 and 31 March. The aim of the course was to make them aware of the political, operational and legal framework in which they will operate, to familiarize them with their daily duties and to provide guidance on how best to resolve possible issues to de-escalate potentially difficult situations.

The course received an upgrade this year, offering practical scenarios on top of the standard theoretical lessons. A three-scenario exercise in Exercise-Sector 3, located within the UNPA,

was implemented for the first time and will be standard for coming rotations. The aim of this exercise, covering nearly all prominent operational military and civilian issues, was to give the students practice in responding to incidents they may encounter during their UNFICYP tour. The MOLOs and SCAMLOs from the outgoing rotation were the role players for all interacting representatives, including the police, hunters, military forces, UNPOL, etc... One retired UN civilian employee also got on board, playing the role of a very persistent Cypriot farmer.

On the final afternoon, all officers successfully accomplished the course and received their certificates from the Force Commander, Major General Kristin Lund, who expressed her appreciation for the new format and the excellent work of the course organizers.

The course was organised by HQ MOLO officers: Lt. Col. Michael Hafner, Lt. Col. Stanislav Babnic, his predecessor Lt. Col. Jozef Panko, and HQ CAMLO Maj. Nikolaus Barthl, as well as the MOLOs and SCAMLOs from the Sectors: Maj. Christian Leithold Lira, Maj. Tim Cummings and Maj. András Somlai-Kiss.



Certificates hand over by the Force Commander, Major General Kristin Lund.



CAMLOs briefing



A scenario from the training depicts a 'Cypriot farmer' interacting with one UN patrol and SCAMLOs.

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