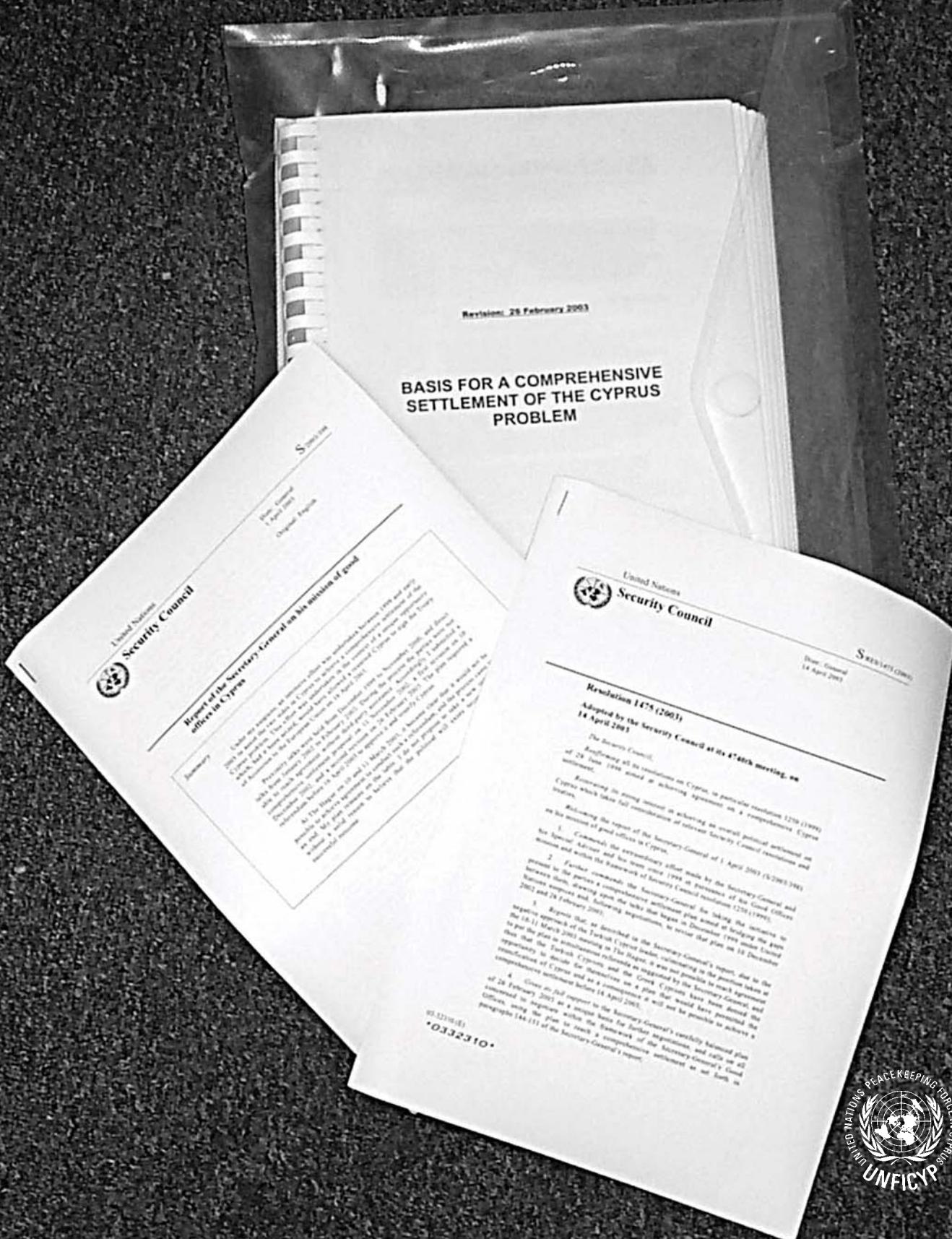


The Blue Beret

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Security Council Resolution 1475

The Security Council,

Reaffirming all its resolutions on Cyprus, in particular resolution 1250 (1999) of 29 June 1999 aimed at achieving agreement on a comprehensive Cyprus settlement, Reiterating its strong interest in achieving an overall political settlement on Cyprus which takes full consideration of relevant Security Council resolutions and treaties,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General of 1 April 2003 (S/2003/398) on his mission of good offices in Cyprus,

1. Commends the extraordinary effort made by the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser and his team since 1999 in pursuance of his Good Offices mission and within the framework of Security Council resolution 1250 (1999);

2. Further commends the Secretary-General for taking the initiative to present to the parties a comprehensive settlement plan aimed at bridging the gaps between them, drawing upon the talks that began in December 1999 under United Nations auspices and, following negotiations, to revise that plan on 10 December 2002 and 26 February 2003;

3. Regrets that, as described in the Secretary-General's report, due to the negative approach of the Turkish Cypriot leader, culminating in the position taken at the 10-11 March 2003 meeting in The Hague, it was not possible to reach agreement to put the plan to simultaneous referenda as suggested by the Secretary-General, and thus that the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots have been denied the opportunity to decide for themselves on a plan that would have permitted the reunification of Cyprus and as a consequence it will not be possible to achieve a comprehensive settlement before 16 April 2003;

4. Gives its full support to the Secretary-General's carefully balanced plan of 26 February 2003 as a unique basis for further negotiations, and calls on all concerned to negotiate within the framework of the Secretary-General's Good Offices, using the plan to reach a comprehensive settlement as set forth in paragraphs 144-151 of the Secretary-General's report;

5. Stresses its full support for the Secretary-General's mission of Good Offices as entrusted to him in resolution 1250 (1999) and asks the Secretary-General to continue to make available his Good Offices for Cyprus as outlined in his report;

6. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

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Security Council Briefing

The Council has before it the Secretary-General's written report on his efforts between late 1999 and 11 March 2003 to assist the two sides in Cyprus achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem.

This is the first written report on the Secretary-General's mission of good offices since June of 1999. It covers a long period of negotiations. It describes the thinking behind the Secretary-General's comprehensive proposals. It makes a number of observations about the process and the way ahead. Hence its length.

The report speaks for itself and I only wish to add a few comments.

The Cyprus problem is the oldest item continually on the Secretary-General's peace-making agenda. It is difficult to see a set of circumstances for achieving a settlement as propitious as that which prevailed in the last three and a half years.

In terms of the wider political environment in the region, all the conditions were in place. In addition, the Secretary-General himself was deeply and heavily involved in the effort, throwing his full backing behind it. The Council strongly supported him every step of the way. And, I believe, a fair and honourable package, comprehensive in approach and only needing technical finalization, was on the table.

The fact that a solution has not been achieved in these circumstances is therefore deeply disappointing. It seems attributable to failings of political will rather than to the absence of favourable circumstances. Obviously, towards the end of the process, when decisions had to be made, the crisis in Iraq loomed large and made it difficult, particularly for Turkey, to take the bold decisions, and bring the necessary influence to bear, in order to achieve a settlement. Be that as it may, a unique opportunity has been missed, and the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots have been denied the opportunity to vote to reunite Cyprus. This the Secretary-General deeply regrets.

The immediate losers are the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey, but the Greek Cypriots and Greece are also losers – this is truly a lose-lose outcome. The Secretary-General's views as to why this opportunity was missed are contained in his report.

If the failure of this effort tells us anything, it confirms something we all already knew – this is one of the most difficult diplomatic problems in the world. This is why the Secretary-General believes that it would be a great step backward if the plan were simply allowed to wither away.

Of course, like all human endeavours, the plan is not perfect. No doubt one can have different views about it, particularly in the details. But the plan represents the best effort of the United Nations to generate a balanced and truly comprehensive proposal which resolves all issues, leaves little to be negotiated, and above all, represents a fair and honourable settlement which meets the core interests and aspirations of both sides. It is based on a three-and-a-half year process of unprecedented intensity and stands on the shoulders of four decades of UN peace-making efforts in Cyprus.

I urge members of the Council not to under-estimate what an extraordinarily difficult task it is to achieve an overall balance on the range of issues that must be settled. Every word of the plan was worked on many times, carefully calibrated, and weighed in the overall balance. One Turkish columnist wrote that the plan is like an Alexander Calder mobile. All aspects are interconnected. If any significant piece is removed and the balance is altered, it could fall to the ground.

That is why the Secretary-General, in his report, speaks of the need, in a future negotiation, not to re-open the basic principles or key trade-offs in the plan. In the coming period, after the signature of the EU accession treaty on 16 April, through the entry into force of that treaty on 1 May 2004, and in the run-up to the European Council of December 2004 in which a decision is to be taken on accession talks with Turkey, the overwhelming

need is for the parties to hew closely to the plan. To re-open its basic principles or key trade-offs would be to put the entire enterprise at peril.

That is why Mr. Denktash's suggestion in The Hague - that the parties should return to a discussion on principles - did not, in the Secretary-General's view, give any hope that agreement could be achieved; and equally why Mr. Papadopoulos's preparedness not to re-open the substantive parts of the plan if Mr. Denktash responded in the same manner was welcome. The hope must be that, in time, the Turkish Cypriot side will come around to the same position that Mr. Papadopoulos took in The Hague.

In the Secretary-General's view, the point had been reached where the leaders on each side should accept that the plan couldn't be significantly improved by further negotiation, and therefore that they should be prepared to finalize it and put it to referendum. This is what the Secretary-General said to the leaders when he was in Cyprus. Without that honest intellectual realization on the part of both sides, and without the leaders being prepared to explain this to their people, it is difficult to see a settlement being achieved.

Looking to the future, as his report outlines, the Secretary-General does not intend to take a new initiative unless and until such time as he has solid reason to believe that the political will exists necessary for a successful outcome. This would come about if there was an unequivocally-stated preparedness on the part of the leaders of both sides, fully and determinedly backed at the highest political level in both motherlands, to commit (a) to finalize the plan (without re-opening its basic principles or key trade-offs) by a specific date, with United Nations assistance, and (b) to put it to separate simultaneous referenda as provided for in the plan on a date certain soon thereafter. The onus is on the parties – and the motherlands – to demonstrate the political will to solve the problem on the basis of his plan, in the manner which the Secretary-General has suggested.

Since the events described in this report, Mr. Denktash has written to Mr. Papadopoulos proposing that they meet to discuss a range of confidence building measures. Mr. Denktash was motivated to do this, according to his letter, to address the deep crisis of confidence which he believes exists between the two sides, and which in his view was a major cause of the stalemate at The Hague.

Mr. Papadopoulos responded that, in his view, the stalemate was caused not by a crisis of confidence but by Mr. Denktash and Turkey not accepting the Secretary-General's plan as the basis for a negotiating a final settlement. Mr. Papadopoulos restated in the most clear terms that he remains committed, even after 16 April, to finding a solution "within the parameters of the Annan plan", and called on Mr. Denktash to indicate that he accepts the Secretary-General's plan as the basis for a further negotiating process.

Mr. Denktash responded restating his conviction that a crisis of confidence has obstructed all efforts, including the most recent one, to resolve the Cyprus problem, and said that his confidence building proposals remain on the table. He reaffirmed a point made in his earlier letter, namely, that he continues to support the good offices mission of the Secretary-General – on this he and Mr. Papadopoulos appear to be in agreement. However, Mr. Denktash, without accepting the Secretary-General's plan as the basis for a further negotiating process, proposed that the leaders should discuss the amendments they want to present to it, and, if agreed, put the plan to referendum. To our knowledge, Mr. Papadopoulos has not responded to this further letter at this time.

As I said, the Secretary-General's report gives his views as to why the process was not successful, and outlines what he believes should be the best way forward. The criteria contained therein will guide the Secretary-General in his good offices role in the future.

-- Alvaro de Soto
10 April 2003



Extracts from the Secretary-General's Report on his Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus



Summary

Under my auspices, an intensive effort was undertaken between 1999 and early 2003 to assist the two sides in Cyprus to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. This effort was undertaken in the context of a unique opportunity which, had it been seized, would have allowed a reunited Cyprus to sign the Treaty of Accession to the European Union on 16 April 2003. Proximity talks were held from December 1999 to November 2000, and direct talks from January 2002 to February 2003. During the process, the parties were not able to reach agreement without third-party assistance. Accordingly, I submitted a comprehensive settlement proposal on 11 November 2002, a first revision on 10 December 2002, and a second revision on 26 February 2003.

The plan required a referendum before 16 April 2003 to approve it and reunify Cyprus. At The Hague on 10 and 11 March 2003, it became clear that it would not be possible to achieve agreement to conduct such a referendum, and the process came to an end. My plan remains on the table. I do not propose to take a new initiative without a solid reason to believe that the political will exists necessary for a successful outcome.

An overview of the process (paras 8-14)

The main events in the process are described in the calendar annexed to this report. From December 1999 to November 2000, the leaders, at my invitation, attended five sessions of proximity talks, alternately in Geneva and New York, to prepare the ground for meaningful negotiations leading to a comprehensive settlement. I was present at every session of talks which were otherwise hosted by my Special Adviser. This process ended when Mr. Denktash did not accept my invitation to a sixth session of talks in January 2001.

Efforts to resume the process, including a meeting I held with Mr. Denktash in Salzburg late in August 2001, led to my invitation of 5 September 2001 to the two leaders to a new and reinvigorated phase of negotiations. Mr. Clerides accepted the invitation but Mr. Denktash declined it.

In November 2001, Mr. Denktash wrote to Mr. Clerides proposing a direct meeting. There followed an exchange of letters, as a result of which they met for the first time in more than four years on 4 December 2001 in the presence of my Special Adviser and agreed to begin direct talks in Cyprus the following month under my auspices. After the meeting, the two leaders dined at each other's residences.

The direct talks began, in the presence of my Special Adviser, on 16 January 2002, in a previously dilapidated building in the United Nations Protected Area in Nicosia refurbished into a conference and office facility within the space of a month. The talks ran until February 2003, the leaders usually meeting two or three times a week. The talks were punctuated only by short breaks. I visited the island from 14 to 16 May 2002 to encourage the leaders, and I met them again in Paris on 6 September and in New York on 3 and 4 October 2002, after which Mr. Denktash underwent surgery in New York. In addition to his work on the island, my Special Adviser held regular consultations with Greece and Turkey.

My Special Adviser helped to guide the discussions and by mid-2002, he was making concrete suggestions to assist the parties to build bridges. I refrained however from making a written substantive input until 11 November 2002, when, no breakthrough having been achieved, and believing that no other course of action remained open if the opportunity was to be seized, I put forward a document which I believed constituted a sound basis for agreement on a comprehensive settlement. Following intensive consultations, I put forward a revised proposal on 10 December 2002, hoping to assist the parties to reach agreement in time for the Copenhagen European Council on 12 and 13 December 2002.

Regrettably, agreement was not reached at that time but negotiations resumed on the island in mid-January 2003. In parallel, technical committees, agreed to by the two leaders in my presence on 4 October 2002 in New York, began meeting, following a three-month delay on the part of Mr. Denktash in appointing the Turkish Cypriot representatives. Greece and Turkey met on 21 February to address security issues related to the plan.

In the last week of February 2003, I visited Turkey, Greece and Cyprus, formally presented a third version of my plan on 26 February, and invited the leaders to The Hague on 10 March to inform me whether they were prepared to sign a commitment to submit the plan for approval at separate simultaneous referenda on 30 March 2003. On 11 March, at 0530 hours and following negotiations with the two leaders and the guarantor powers lasting more than 19 hours, I announced that there had been no such agreement, and at that point the process which had begun in December 1999 reached the end of the road. The office in Cyprus of my Special Adviser, which opened in advance of the direct talks, is to close during April.

The way ahead (paras 144-148)

As I made clear following the failure at The Hague, I believe that the end has been reached in the effort that began late in 1999. The window of opportunity that opened then was closed at the meeting of 10 and 11 March 2003. It is a matter of profound regret that the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots have been denied the opportunity to decide for themselves on a plan that would have permitted the reunification of Cyprus through an honourable, balanced and durable settlement, protecting and guaranteeing the basic interests and aspirations of both sides.

The level, intensity and duration of the effort of the United Nations in this period are without precedent. The result of that effort, the plan that I presented as finally revised on 26 February 2003, remains on the table.

When I met the two leaders on 27 February in Cyprus, I asked them to accept that further political discussions could not produce a better result. It was on the basis of this that I asked them to draw the necessary conclusion and let the people decide their own future. The parties would do well to adhere to what is now before them as the finely wrought balance that it is. In this context, I am pleased that Mr. Papadopoulos has reiterated his continued desire to seek a settlement on the basis of my plan even after accession to the European Union.

I do not propose to take a new initiative, unless and until such time as I am given solid reason to believe that the political will exists necessary for a successful outcome. I have already indicated publicly that I do not believe that such an opportunity will occur any time soon. I do believe, however, that it would be a great step backward if the plan as such were to simply wither away.

In my view, a solution on the basis of the plan could

be achieved only if there is an unequivocally stated preparedness on the part of the leaders of both sides, fully and determinedly backed at the highest political level in both motherlands, to commit themselves (a) to finalize the plan (without reopening its basic principles or essential trade-offs) by a specific date with United Nations assistance, and (b) to put it to separate simultaneous referenda as provided for in the plan on a date certain soon thereafter.

The Secretary-General's Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus Calendar of Main Events, June 1999-April 2003

1999		2002
22 Jun:	Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/1999/707)	14 Jan: Office of the Special Adviser opens in Cyprus
26 Jun:	Security Council resolution 1250 (1999)	16 Jan: Direct talks begin, United Nations Protected Area, Nicosia
1 Nov:	Appointment of Alvaro de Soto as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus	14-16 May: Secretary-General visits Cyprus
3-13 Dec:	First session of proximity talks, New York, with Glafcos Clerides, the Greek Cypriot leader, and Rauf Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot leader	6 Sep: Secretary-General meets the leaders in Paris
10 Dec:	Helsinki European Council	3-4 Oct: Secretary-General meets the leaders in New York; leaders agree to create technical committees
31 Jan-8 Feb:	Second session of proximity talks, Geneva	7 Oct: Mr. Denktash undergoes surgery in New York; direct talks do not resume until January 2003
5-12 Jul:	Third session of proximity talks, Geneva	11 Nov: Secretary-General tables his proposed Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem
24 Jul-4 Aug:	Continuation of third session of proximity talks, Geneva	18 Nov: Mr. Clerides agrees to negotiate on the Secretary-General's plan
9-26 Sep:	Fourth session of proximity talks, New York	27 Nov: Mr. Denktash agrees to negotiate on the Secretary-General's plan
12 Sep:	Statement by the Secretary-General to the parties	7 Dec: Mr. Denktash returns from New York to Cyprus
1-8 Nov:	Fifth session of proximity talks, Geneva	10 Dec: Secretary-General tables a revised Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem
8 Nov:	Secretary-General's oral remarks to the parties; Mr. Denktash declines invitation to participate in further proximity talks	12-13 Dec: Copenhagen European Council
2000		2003
14 May:	Secretary-General addresses a gathering of European Union Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Brussels	7 Jan: Technical committees begin meeting
28 Aug:	Secretary-General meets Mr. Denktash in Salzburg	15 Jan: Direct talks resume
5 Sep:	Secretary-General invites leaders to new and reinvigorated phase of talks; Mr. Clerides accepts; Mr. Denktash declines	16 Feb: Tassos Papadopoulos is elected to succeed Mr. Clerides
Nov:	Exchange of letters between Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash leads to agreement to meet face-to-face in the presence of a United Nations representative	23-25 Feb: Secretary-General visits Turkey and Greece
4 Dec:	Meeting between Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash, United Nations Protected Area, Nicosia, in the presence of the Special Adviser results in agreement to begin direct talks	26 Feb: Secretary-General arrives in Cyprus and formally tables his further revised Basis for a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem
5 Dec:	Mr. Clerides dines at the residence of Mr. Denktash, north Nicosia	28 Feb: Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Denktash accept the Secretary-General's invitation to meet in The Hague
29 Dec:	Mr. Denktash dines at the residence of Mr. Clerides, south Nicosia	10 Mar: Secretary-General meets with Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Denktash in The Hague, along with representatives of the guarantors
		11 Mar: Secretary-General announces in The Hague that the process has concluded but that his plan remains on the table
		16 April: Office in Cyprus of the Special Adviser closes

To access the Secretary-General's full report to the Security Council, go to: www.un.org/docs/sc
To access the full text of the plan - Basis for a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem (Revision: 26 February 2003), to www.cyprus-un-plan.org

Mobile Force Reserve APC Platoon

By Lt. Claudio Ordóñez

The Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) Platoon is an essential part of the Mobile Force Reserve, consisting entirely of Argentine soldiers. The Platoon has 13 members, one APC platoon commander, three mechanics and nine drivers.

The MFR demands a quick response from the APC platoon, which must be prepared to provide both vehicles and drivers at short notice on demand. The "TACTICA" provides high-speed, armoured protection and personnel load capability, which make it a perfect tool to carry out tasks in a tense environment. All nine TACTICAs are maintained completely by their drivers and the specialist three-man mechanic team. They are responsible for the good condition of the vehicles, servicing them daily to keep the TACTICA fleet operational.

The TACTICA, a 4x4 vehicle designed by Globber Webb, first served as an armoured patrol vehicle with police forces. Since July 1997, the Argentinian Contingent in the MFR has been successfully conducting mobile patrols within the BZ. Increased patrols are often required during the hunting season. Essentially, however, the TACTICA is used for crowd control during demonstrations.



April this year where the 21 Air Assault Battery will be represented by LBdrs. Ahmed and Smith. Their training began in early December 2002 with ringcraft, footwork, stance and defence.

For LBdr. Ahmed it was a case of getting back into a well-rehearsed routine, having boxed as an amateur with well-regarded "pros" including Michael Gomez. For LBdr. Smith it was a chance to learn new skills and try different approaches to boxing. In March, they moved up a gear to include sparring and hone the skills they practised on the bag and pads. However, it's not all boxing, with many a run and weights session, helping to increase punching power.

For others, such as Bdr. Spriggs (best boxer in the 2001 Inter-Battery competition) and Gnr. Gilbert (several bouts as a junior when younger), it is a chance to keep fit with a bit of a difference. All members of the squad have shown great enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. The gunners have used this training as a stepping-stone to increasing their fitness in preparation for "p-company" (pre-parachute selection) on return from operational duties. Boxing requires a healthy measure of confidence and courage, and MCpl. Sanchez has demonstrated plenty of both, always keen to practise his newfound skills.

Many thanks to LBdr. Ahmed for all the time he has put in to the squad's training and good luck to all the squad members – whether they are involved in competitive bouts or simply continuing their training.



Gnr. C. Fuller (right) with LBdr. W. Smith hard at training

Lots of Bidding for Lots as FMPU Raises £4,100

By SSgt. D. Bates

Doing their bit for the community in Cyprus, the FMPU held a charity auction on 5 April to raise funds for two children's charities on the island, the Greek Cypriot, Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation and the Turkish Cypriot SOS charity.

After resolving the problems of: "What do we have to auction?" and "Where would we find items that people would give us and that other people would want to buy?", nine weeks of begging from firms, businesses, travel agents and all manner of people for lots that we could auction began. This meant numerous letters, faxes, telephone calls and good old-fashioned foot slogging, during the evenings and at weekends.

We were pleasantly surprised at people's generosity and we eventually ended up with over 140 items. These included cruises, weekend breaks, restaurant meals, diving lessons, jewellery and many other generous donations. Now that we had the items to sell, we needed the people to buy them. A media campaign was launched on Lotus Notes, with posters, flyers and BFBS radio broadcasts, in the hope of attracting people with



money to spend. As the day drew closer, we decided that in addition to the auction during the day, we would have a disco in the evening. This then made us think that families would be attending for the auction (hopefully) in which case we also needed entertainment for the children and food for all, should they get peckish. Thus came the idea of making more money by donating the food profits and the FPM also kindly agreed that all bar profits for the day could be added to the takings. What had started out as a simple auction had quickly become a family day out.

Saturday 5 April dawned warm but cloudy. The scene was set and all the lots were ready. I knew that the lots were there but we needed the people and the weather. Thankfully, neither let us down. Despite the initial panic of the bouncy castles not turning up or the ice cream van breaking down, both arrived and were well utilized. There was still much to do to ensure that the day ran smoothly. Not only did the auction need to go well, but there was also car parking, creche facilities and a whole host of other problems to sort out.

SSgt. Danny Bevan, who did a good job of separating people from their money, handled the bidding side. SSgt. John Murray and WO2 Jaqui Collins donned flat caps and overalls to display the items. The rest of the FMPU team were employed on security, car parking, escort duties and when they could, bidding for items. The day was very well attended and our collective thanks go to those who participated and bought something. The hard work and professionalism of the FMPU team ensured that the event ran smoothly and as a result, the impressive sum of £4,100 was raised for the charities.



Handing over the first cheque to Mr. Neophytou from the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation

Check In, Check Up

Members of the FMPU were once again involved in the routine pre-departure luggage search of departing HUNCON and SLOVCON personnel from Famagusta during the April rotation to ensure that dangerous cargo is not carried on the aircraft.

New security regulations, brought about as a result of 11 September, dictate that the following items are not carried: corkscrews, darts, knives, nail files, etc.

Duty free entitlements include 200 cigarettes OR 100 small cigars OR 50 cigars OR 250 tobacco, as well as 1 litre of spirits OR 2 litres of wine (fortified or otherwise) and 1 small bottle of perfume not exceeding .06 litres.



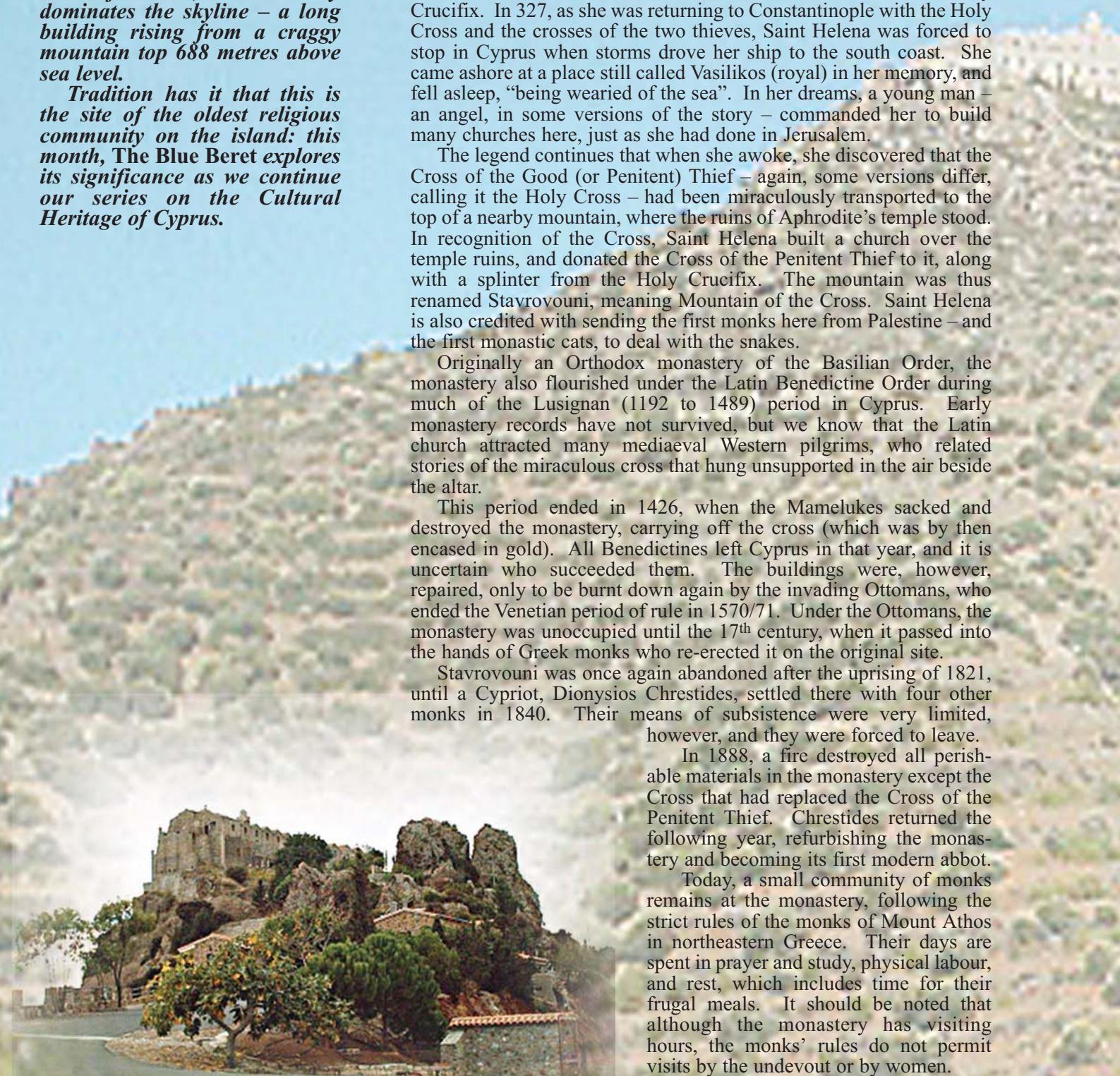
The Cultural Heritage of Cyprus: Part XI

Stavrovouni - Mountain of the Cross



Located high on a mountain once known as Olympus, Stavrovouni Monastery is one of the island's most important religious sites. Visible for miles, including from the A1 motorway approximately 32 kilometres south of Nicosia, the Monastery dominates the skyline – a long building rising from a craggy mountain top 688 metres above sea level.

Tradition has it that this is the site of the oldest religious community on the island: this month, The Blue Beret explores its significance as we continue our series on the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus.



In classical times, the mountain of Stavrovouni was known as Olympus, and at its peak, a temple of Aphrodite became a place of pilgrimage. Despite having been abandoned and rebuilt numerous times over the ensuing centuries, Stavrovouni remains a pilgrimage site today, deeply meaningful to the Greek Orthodox community.

Ecclesiastical tradition has it that Stavrovouni was one of three churches founded on Cyprus by Saint Helena, whose son, Emperor Constantine the Great, had sent her to Jerusalem in search of the Holy Crucifix. In 327, as she was returning to Constantinople with the Holy Cross and the crosses of the two thieves, Saint Helena was forced to stop in Cyprus when storms drove her ship to the south coast. She came ashore at a place still called Vasilikos (royal) in her memory, and fell asleep, "being wearied of the sea". In her dreams, a young man – an angel, in some versions of the story – commanded her to build many churches here, just as she had done in Jerusalem.

The legend continues that when she awoke, she discovered that the Cross of the Good (or Penitent) Thief – again, some versions differ, calling it the Holy Cross – had been miraculously transported to the top of a nearby mountain, where the ruins of Aphrodite's temple stood. In recognition of the Cross, Saint Helena built a church over the temple ruins, and donated the Cross of the Penitent Thief to it, along with a splinter from the Holy Crucifix. The mountain was thus renamed Stavrovouni, meaning Mountain of the Cross. Saint Helena is also credited with sending the first monks here from Palestine – and the first monastic cats, to deal with the snakes.

Originally an Orthodox monastery of the Basilian Order, the monastery also flourished under the Latin Benedictine Order during much of the Lusignan (1192 to 1489) period in Cyprus. Early monastery records have not survived, but we know that the Latin church attracted many mediaeval Western pilgrims, who related stories of the miraculous cross that hung unsupported in the air beside the altar.

This period ended in 1426, when the Mamelukes sacked and destroyed the monastery, carrying off the cross (which was by then encased in gold). All Benedictines left Cyprus in that year, and it is uncertain who succeeded them. The buildings were, however, repaired, only to be burnt down again by the invading Ottomans, who ended the Venetian period of rule in 1570/71. Under the Ottomans, the monastery was unoccupied until the 17th century, when it passed into the hands of Greek monks who re-erected it on the original site.

Stavrovouni was once again abandoned after the uprising of 1821, until a Cypriot, Dionysios Chrestides, settled there with four other monks in 1840. Their means of subsistence were very limited, however, and they were forced to leave.

In 1888, a fire destroyed all perishable materials in the monastery except the Cross that had replaced the Cross of the Penitent Thief. Chrestides returned the following year, refurbishing the monastery and becoming its first modern abbot.

Today, a small community of monks remains at the monastery, following the strict rules of the monks of Mount Athos in northeastern Greece. Their days are spent in prayer and study, physical labour, and rest, which includes time for their frugal meals. It should be noted that although the monastery has visiting hours, the monks' rules do not permit visits by the undevout or by women.

Stavrovouni Monastery

Reached by a steep, 9.5-kilometre road, the monastery buildings form a rectangle, with the church itself on the eastern side and the entrance at the western extremity of the rock. Although the present buildings are relatively modern, it is believed that the crypt is original. The church design is tripartite, or divided into three parts (a very early design) and has two central domes. The remains of Aphrodite's temple lie to the east, while three massive flying buttresses support the outer wall of the monastery to the west – a legacy of the Latin monks, who added them in the 14th or 15th centuries.

The monastery's large wooden cross, minutely carved with scenes from the life of Christ, is dated 1476. It was encased in silver in 1702, and contains a splinter from the true Cross in a gold cover. In the north corridor, a plaque is engraved with a prayer by an 11th-century monk.

Until quite recently, rainwater was the monastery's only water supply. However, in 1983, electricity, water supply and telephone communications were installed while the old monastery buildings were being refurbished.

In addition, the church was decorated with wall paintings by Father Kallinikos of Stavrovouni, and a chapel dedicated to the Saints of Cyprus was built, along with a new central gate and two wings (one for the cells of the monks, and one for their workshops).

Metochia

Stavrovouni has four dependencies, or metochia, which is Greek for monasterial farmlands that are normally cultivated by the monks. These metochia are located apart from the monastery, and feature cells and a church for the monks' use while they are living there. The monks of Stavrovouni produce honey and olive oil, which is sold to visitors at their metochi of Agia Varvara (Saint Barbara), located at the foot of Stavrovouni mountain. Originally built in the 13th and 14th centuries, Agia Varvara was refurbished with a donation by a Russian nun who visited the monastery and the metochi in 1819. The buildings have recently been restored, and are also home to the icon paintings of Father Kallinikos.

Located about 3.5 kilometres northwest of Klavdia village in the Larnaka district, the Panagia Stazousa church is part of a ruined 14th-century Cistercian monastery. The church itself is small, but well proportioned. Daylight came through two upper windows on each of the north and south walls, a smaller window in the apse, and a round window in the east wall.

Agios Modestos, meanwhile, is a small, modern church of the 1940s that is located about three kilometres northeast of Agia Varvara enroute to Pyrga village.

The fourth metochi, Agios Georgios, can be found at Arpera, an extinct mediaeval village about 2.5 kilometres northwest of Tersephanou, some distance from Stavrovouni. The present church was built in 1736 on the ruins of a previous church, and was decorated with wall paintings in 1747.

The church design features Franco-Byzantine origins, with a single aisle and external reinforcement from five buttresses on the north and south walls. At the west end of the aisle, wooden beams support the secluded women's gallery, from which they would have been able to follow the services unobserved through the lattice work of the upper part of a wooden parapet.

The wall paintings, which were never completed, cover parts of the north and south walls and the bema (the area containing the altar). Depicted over the north door is the family of the Greek donor, Christophakis Constantinou. He was the Ottoman governor's "dragoman", which is the misspelling of the Ottoman word tercuman, which means interpreter. In the painting, he is richly dressed in a long robe, which is fastened at the neck and decorated with grey fur on the front openings, cuffs, pockets and collar. His black fur cap is the type worn by the Ottoman dragoman, and his family is also richly dressed.

Facing this group is Saint George, behind a replica of the church. An inscription on the scroll of an angel near the bema mentions the names of the family members, some of which are of western origin. This indicates that the family had western relations, which explains the Franco-Byzantine architecture and paintings.

On the north wall, Saints Symeon Stylites and Tryphon appear. Saint Peter appears next to the window, and further on is Saint George, the church's honoured saint. On the south wall are Saints Paul and Michael. In the bema, a painting of "the Deposition" appears, showing Christ in a sarcophagus with a worshipping angel on either side and two other angels approaching.

Water Wars A Real Possibility

It has become an almost unchallenged assumption that the 21st century faces water wars as communities and countries become increasingly thirsty, increasingly desperate for the world's most precious and most fundamental natural resource.

Alarming statistics and forecasts of the impending calamity proliferate.

A third of the world lives in water-stressed areas, where consumption outstrips supply. By 2025, two-thirds of people will be trapped in this appalling plight, if current trends continue unchecked.

A fifth of the world's population is without access to safe water supplies. Some 6,000 people – mainly children and mainly in developing countries – die every day as a result of dirty, contaminated water. Annually, that is the equivalent of the entire population of central Paris being wiped out.

Sewage pollution of rivers and seas has precipitated a health crisis of massive proportions. The eating of contaminated shellfish causes an estimated 2.5 million cases of infectious hepatitis annually, resulting in 25,000 deaths and a further 25,000 people suffering long-term disability due to liver damage.

Around half of the world's rivers are seriously depleted and polluted. Some of the globe's most important wetlands and inland waters, including the Aral Sea and the Marshlands of Mesopotamia, have shrunk, triggering environmental calamities for people and wildlife and the fisheries upon which they mutually depend.

Two billion people, around one-third of the world's population, depend on groundwater supplies. In parts of India, China, West Asia, including the Arabian Peninsula, the former Soviet Union and the western United States, groundwater levels are falling as a result of over-abstraction. Groundwater in Western Europe and the United States is also becoming increasingly polluted by chemicals used in agriculture.

Small wonder that few could be forgiven for concluding that the Earth's glass is half empty, rather than half full. That inter-communal, international, conflict and disputes over water resources will inevitably occur as the population climbs by two billion to over eight billion by 2050 and the spectre of global warming takes hold in the form of more extreme weather events including droughts.

But, if history is our guide, then we have quiet optimism for hope that we can steer the world's water policy away from the rocks of inevitability.

Research, to be presented at the 3rd World Water Forum taking place in Kyoto, Japan, this month, and to coincide with World Water Day, has analysed the history of freshwater agreements stretching back 4,500 years.

It indicates that cooperation rather than conflict has been the norm over recent centuries in terms of managing rivers and their catchment areas. Indeed the work shows that, when push comes to shove, nations and communities more often than not take the path of peace and share rather than hoard water resources, whether it be for drinking water supplies, wildlife protection or more recently hydro-power.

There are other signs of hope. Up until the middle of the last century, many of the rivers on continents like North America and Europe and especially those running through big industrial areas were so polluted they were classed as "dead". Some were so polluted that the water could be used as ink, and noxious gases, bubbling up from their depths, could be ignited by a match.

Today, after billions of dollars of investment in water treatment works and agreements with industry on effluents, fish are again spawning and migrating to their upper reaches through these now relatively clean estuaries and tributaries.

The Thames in Britain was officially declared a dead river half a century ago, save for a few mud worms. Today, some 120 species including migrating salmon can be found in its waters.

Improvements are also being seen in the developing world, contrary to popular belief. In the South Asian region, for example, access to improved sanitation systems between 1990 and 2000 has benefited some 220 million people. Unfortunately, the progress has been overwhelmed by population growth, meaning that over 800 million still do not have the safe and healthy systems they deserve.

But it shows that, given political will, diplomacy and investment, real changes can be made, real hope can replace helplessness.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg has given the world the blueprint for how sustainable development, development that lasts, development that respects people and the planet, can be achieved.

We do not need any more declarations. What is needed now is action to implement WSSD's Plan of Implementation and the myriad of voluntary partnerships, between industry, non-governmental organisations, governments and the United Nations.

Many of these concern water and the goal of halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015, a target that is closely linked to improving the living conditions of the poor who are without adequate shelter or basic services in slums and squatter settlements.

World Water Day is a focus for this action and the Forum a pump for turning the texts of Johannesburg from a trickle into a torrent of activity. 2003 is also the International Year of Freshwater. It must play its part in maintaining momentum.

A great deal of goodwill, of imagination and resolve is needed. We do not want the forecasts of disaster, the prophets of doom, to be proved right. So we also need funds to build up the infrastructure needed for cleaner, healthier and more abundant supplies of water.

So the pledges and promises made in Monterrey, Mexico, last year at the Finance for Development conference to reverse the decline in overseas aid, must be met.

Too much water is being wasted. That over 50 per cent of water in some African cities is lost in leaky, decrepit, pipes is a disgrace.

Agriculture, where 70% of freshwater is used, is wasteful. Drip technologies or underground pipes are cheap and simple. Let's make them more widely available.

We must give water value, both spiritual and economic. This cannot, however, be at the expense of the urban poor who already pay a high price for this resource. So we must be creative in the way water is priced and offer inexpensive, water-saving, alternatives for farmers, industry, cities and consumers.

History may teach us that cooperation over freshwater resources, such as rivers, is the norm. It also teaches us that complacency is not an option. There are over 150 river basins where there are inadequate cooperative agreements.

Many of these could become potential flash points. So another urgent need is for international organisations to apply the lessons of the past, for the benefit of the present and future parties.

To act as the water equivalent of marriage guidance counselors, amicably resolving differences between countries and communities who may be straying apart, or acting as go-between for those who are flirting with cooperation but are too coy, too unsure, about how to proceed.

We have, at the beginning of the new century, all the intellectual, financial and technological resources we need to overcome the current and future water crises.

Like the water we all prize so much, let's not waste it.

Nitin Desai, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Mark Malloch Brown, UN Development Programme

Klaus Toepfer, UN Environment Programme

Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO

Anna Tibaijuka, UN-Habitat

Carol Bellamy, UNICEF

Hans van Ginkel, UN University

**World Water Day
was 22 March**

WATER WISE

With the heavy rainfall experienced in Cyprus this winter one would think the island's water problems had been resolved. Although the rainfall was a much welcome relief and has managed to fill the island's dams to around 75% of capacity it does not mean water conservation measures can be forgotten. As the hot summer approaches it is of even greater importance to use water sparingly. Until recently, all water resources available in Cyprus came from rainfall. It now has water desalination plants that have increased the available resources – but at great cost both financially and to the environment. According to water experts the mean annual precipitation in Cyprus, including snowfall, was approximately 500 millimetres, but during the past 30 years (1971-2000) this amount has been reduced to 460 millimetres. Geographically speaking, rainfall is unevenly distributed in Cyprus, with maximum precipitation falling on the two mountainous masses and minimum precipitation observed in the eastern plain and the coastal areas. The variation in rainfall is not only regional but also annual and often two or three consecutive dry years are observed.

WATER SAVING MEASURES

By following a number of simple water saving measures, which require little time and money to implement, not just during drought conditions but year-round, significant amounts of water can be saved.

- Check the plumbing installation for leaks.
- Check taps for drips and make repairs promptly.
- Install plastic water bags in the toilet flush tanks.
- Take a shower instead of a bath and avoid having to run the water until it's hot. Turn off shower water while you apply soap to the body. Encourage and advise children not to mess around with water in the bath, garden or anywhere else.
- Turn off water while you shave and/or brush teeth.
- Wash only full loads in the washing and dish washing machines.
- Water the garden with a watering can early in the morning or in the evening when evaporation is limited.
- Wash the car with a sponge and a bucket, instead of a hosepipe, which is prohibited by law.
- Use a broom, not a hose, to clean verandas and pavements – the use of a hosepipe for this is prohibited by law.

Reach Out from Mount Olympus to Kilimanjaro

UNFICYP peacekeeper Dermot Higgins serving with IRCON is one of the founder members of Childaid, a charitable organisation run on a voluntary basis by members of the Irish Defence Forces and friends.

His activities for the organisation have included leading groups on five trips to Kilimanjaro in Kenya to raise funds for various projects sponsored by Childaid and he says he would be willing to organise and lead a trip from Cyprus if there is sufficient interest.

Established in 2001 and granted charitable status in 2002, Childaid was born as a result of what some of the founder members experienced while serving with UN missions in places like Somalia, Rwanda, Lebanon, Cyprus, Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor. CS (WO2) Dermot Higgins, who works as Training NCO, DBM and IRCON Administration NCO in Ops Branch UNFICYP HQ says that children are always very close to the hearts of military and international staff, regardless of where they are from or where they are posted. "When one sees the devastating effect that war and poverty have on the kids it makes your heart warm to them even more."



The classrooms of Kwy Nijenga school in Mukuru slums, before...

children's programme in Rwanda, which was being run by an NGO called Refugee Trust. To capture people's imagination, a challenge had to be set that would make gaining sponsorship easier. Trekking up Kilimanjaro would be the ultimate challenge for many.

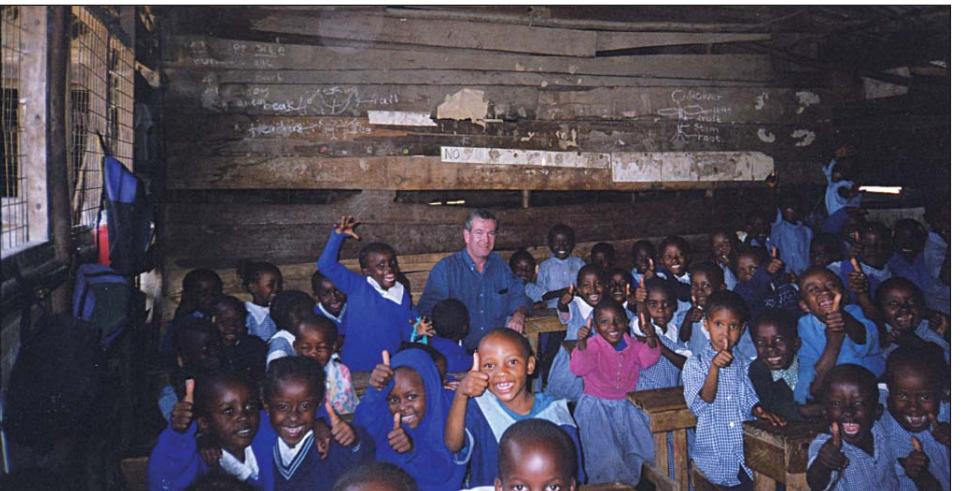
The team started bringing groups of people on sponsored treks of Kilimanjaro – at 19,340 feet, the highest mountain in Africa and the highest freestanding mountain in the world. During these trips the climbers were brought to one of the slums in Nairobi to see first-hand how some of the poorest of the poor tried to survive. Many people on the sponsored climbs asked why their money could not go towards helping some of these people. After some thought and a lot of behind the scenes work it was decided to form Childaid, an organisation that would concentrate totally on children.

Some of the projects being supported by Childaid include the rebuilding of a school in the Mukuru slums in Nairobi, the sponsorship of a drop-in-centre for street children that helps to



.... and after

Dermot last January in another classroom awaiting renovation



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International Women's Day 2003

On 10 April, UNFICYP commemorated International Women's Day with a special bicultural event at the former Ledra Palace Hotel. Bringing together approximately 100 Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot women, the gathering involved people from many different professional and social backgrounds, including teachers, lawyers, judges, physicians, artists and administrators.

Madeline Garlick, from the Civil Affairs Branch, read out to the group the Secretary-General's official Women's Day statement, and invited the participants to reflect on the significance of his words for women in Cyprus. The statement, available on the internet at <http://www.un.org/events/women/iwd/2003/sgmessage.html>, focussed on the Millennium Development Goals, first identified and endorsed by all member states during the Millennium Summit in 2000. Those goals identify the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as a key priority. In addition, they refer to the need to work to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, reduce child mortality and improve maternal health, all of which involve a special role for women in the developing world.

The Secretary-General's message emphasised the importance of "making sure that women and girls have all the skills, services and self-confidence they need to protect themselves" and to help women to "take greater control of their lives, financially as well as physically".

The Ledra Palace participants agreed that these aims have a particular resonance for Cyprus, where women live in conditions better than in many other countries, but where the needs for empowerment and for development of women's potentials remain great. The patriarchal nature of society on both sides continues to pose a problem for many, as well as the stereotypes that successful women encounter in professional and social life.

The evening also involved a special presentation by a bicultural group working on the concept of what it means to be a successful woman in Cyprus. The group,

which has operated for almost two years, involves around 20 women who are working to promote self-confidence, skills development and empowerment among young women in particular in both north and south. Because of the difficulties associated with crossing the buffer zone, most of their meetings take place either in Pyla or separately for the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, with contact and follow-up by email. The 10 April gathering provided a relatively rare opportunity for them to meet in person.

Of course, men were also included in the night! The gathering was graced by the Force Commander's presence, as well as a number of men involved in NGO activity on both sides and internationally.

Through this event, UNFICYP provided an opportunity for a group of vibrant and dynamic women to come together and extend their networks and ideas to others. By this means, it is hoped that they will also draw further inspiration to work for the UN's objectives for women worldwide.



Merope Kapsali (left) and Biran Mertan (right) of the George Washington University bicultural women's group, with Madeline Garlick at the UNFICYP women's day gathering at Ledra Palace

Geoff Hazel – Museum Piece



East Timor veterans Geoff Hazel and Brian Kelly look back

Commander Geoff Hazel, Deputy Commander UNCIVPOL, served with the United Mission Assistance Mission, East Timor, from June to September 1999. That was when the UN organized the popular consultation and the people of East Timor voted to travel down the road to independence rather than opt for closer ties with Indonesia. There was widespread violence at the time and many Timorese died, including a number of local staff members. Geoff was posted in the volatile area of Ermera, where militia did all in their bully-boy power to intimidate and inhibit the democratic process.

In fact, Geoff was wounded when he and UNAMET colleagues came under fire as they sought (successfully) to get the ballot boxes safe and intact to the central counting station in the capital Dili. Geoff was subsequently decorated for his actions. Now he has been asked to submit an oral history on video tape of his experience for display at the Australian National Museum in Canberra. Photo shows UNAMET East Timor veterans Geoff and Brian Kelly taping the interview for the museum.

Main Events: June 1999-April 2003

1999

22 Jun: Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/1999/707)
26 Jun: Security Council resolution 1250 (1999)
1 Nov: Appointment of Alvaro de Soto as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus
3-13 Dec: First session of proximity talks, New York, with Glafcos Clerides, the Greek Cypriot leader, and Rauf Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot leader
10 Dec: Helsinki European Council

2000

31 Jan-8 Feb: Second session of proximity talks, Geneva
5-12 Jul: Third session of proximity talks, Geneva
24 Jul-4 Aug: Continuation of third session of proximity talks, Geneva
9-26 Sep: Fourth session of proximity talks, New York
12 Sep: Statement by the Secretary-General to the parties
1-8 Nov: Fifth session of proximity talks, Geneva
8 Nov: Secretary-General's oral remarks to the parties; Mr. Denktash declines invitation to participate in further proximity talks

2001

14 May: Secretary-General addresses a gathering of European Union Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Brussels
28 Aug: Secretary-General meets Mr. Denktash in Salzburg
5 Sep: Secretary-General invites leaders to new and reinvigorated phase of talks; Mr. Clerides accepts; Mr. Denktash declines
Nov: Exchange of letters between Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash leads to agreement to meet face-to-face in the presence of a United Nations representative
4 Dec: Meeting between Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash, United Nations Protected Area, Nicosia, in the presence of the Special Adviser results in agreement to begin direct talks
5 Dec: Mr. Clerides dines at the residence of Mr. Denktash, north Nicosia
29 Dec: Mr. Denktash dines at the residence of Mr. Clerides, south Nicosia

2002

14 Jan: Office of the Special Adviser opens in Cyprus
16 Jan: Direct talks begin, United Nations Protected Area, Nicosia
14-16 May: Secretary-General visits Cyprus
6 Sep: Secretary-General meets the leaders in Paris
3-4 Oct: Secretary-General meets the leaders in New York; leaders agree to create technical committees
7 Oct: Mr. Denktash undergoes surgery in New York; direct talks do not resume until January 2003
11 Nov: Secretary-General tables his proposed Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem
18 Nov: Mr. Clerides agrees to negotiate on the Secretary-General's plan
27 Nov: Mr. Denktash agrees to negotiate on the Secretary-General's plan
7 Dec: Mr. Denktash returns from New York to Cyprus
10 Dec: Secretary-General tables a revised Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem
12-13 Dec: Copenhagen European Council

2003

7 Jan: Technical committees begin meeting
15 Jan: Direct talks resume
16 Feb: Tassos Papadopoulos is elected to succeed Mr. Clerides
23-25 Feb: Secretary-General visits Turkey and Greece
26 Feb: Secretary-General arrives in Cyprus and formally tables his further revised Basis for a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem
28 Feb: Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Denktash accept the Secretary-General's invitation to meet in The Hague
10 Mar: Secretary-General meets with Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Denktash in The Hague, along with representatives of the guarantors
11 Mar: Secretary-General announces in The Hague that the process has concluded but that his plan remains on the table
16 Apr: Office in Cyprus of the Special Adviser closes