



UNFICYP

A Force for Peace

The United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, UNFICYP, is one of the longest-running UN Peacekeeping missions. It was set up in 1964 to prevent further fighting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities on the island and bring about a return to normal conditions.

The Mission's responsibilities expanded in 1974, following a coup d'état by elements favouring union with Greece and a subsequent military intervention by Turkey, whose troops established control over the northern part of the island.

Since a de facto ceasefire in August 1974, UNFICYP has supervised the ceasefire lines; provided humanitarian assistance; and maintained a buffer zone between the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot forces in the north and the Greek Cypriot forces in the south. UNFICYP's Chief of Mission also serves as the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Cyprus and in that capacity leads efforts to assist the parties in reaching a comprehensive settlement.

The ceasefire lines extend over 180 kilometers across the island. In the absence of a formal ceasefire agreement, UNFICYP's 850-plus troops and 60-plus police officers deal with hundreds of incidents each year.

UNFICYP also delivers humanitarian aid to Greek Cypriots and a small Maronite community living in the northern part of the island and it assists Turkish Cypriots living in the southern part of the island.

UNFICYP supports the fullest possible resumption of normal civilian activity in the buffer zone, keeping in mind that this is still an area under permanent armed watch by military on both sides. To this end, it facilitates the resumption of farming in the buffer zone where safe, and assists both communities on matters related to the supply of electricity and water across the lines.

The Mission is currently headed by Elizabeth Spehar of Canada, who is the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission. The current Force Commander is Major General Cheryl Pearce of Australia.

The Mission's work is based on four components that work together closely: the Military, UN Police (UNPOL), the Civil Affairs Section, and the Administration which supports all activities. The Mission counts almost 1 100 personnel.

Since 1964, almost 186 United Nations personnel have lost their lives while serving in UNFICYP.

The Security Council established UNFICYP through the resolution 186 (1964) on 4 March 1964 and has renewed the Mission's mandate for six-month terms since then.

Attempts to solve the Cyprus conflict and reunify the island have so far been without result, although relations between north and south have improved over the years. Among other things, this led to the opening of several crossing points across the buffer zone, most notably across Ledra Street in old Nicosia on 3 April 2008.

4 March 1964

"The United Nations Security Council adopts resolution 186 (1964), recommending the establishment of UNFICYP."

22 December 1967

"Security Council adopts resolution 244 (1967), which recognizes the enlargement of UNFICYP's mandate to include supervision of disarmament and arrangements to safeguard internal security."

UNFICYP Leadership

Elizabeth Spehar
Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cyprus and Head of UNFICYP



Major General Ingrid Gjerde
Force Commander of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus



Joel Cohen
Chief of Mission Support

Aderemi Adekoya
Senior Adviser

Colonel Neil Wright
Chief of Staff

Assistant Police Commissioner Satu Koivu
Senior Police Adviser

Faylene Woolley
Chief Civil Affairs Officer

Aleem Siddique
Spokesperson

Sergiy Illarionov
Coordinator of the Good Offices Mission



MILITARY



Sector One

Sector One covers a distance of approximately 90 kilometers from Kokkina village on the western coast of Cyprus to the village of Mammari, west of Nicosia.

It has been the responsibility of the Argentinean Contingent since 16 October 1993. The contingent rotates more or less completely every six months. The Military Observer Liaison Officers who liaise daily with military counterparts on the two sides within this region remain in mission for 12-month periods.

Sector One headquarters and Command Company are located in San Martin Camp, which is near Skouriotissa village. Support Company finds its home at Roca Camp, near Xeros in the north. The two line companies are deployed along four permanently manned patrol bases while also conducting mobile patrols from San Martin and Roca camps.

Troop Contributing Countries

Argentina	243
Chile	12
Paraguay	12
Brazil	2
Total	269

Sector Two

Sector Two is the responsibility of the British contingent and it has been since 1993 when the Canadian Forces withdrew its major unit from UNFICYP. The responsibility of the unit is to patrol and monitor military activity over 30 kilometers along the buffer zone, beginning at the east end of Mammari village and ending at the village of Kaimakli to the east of Nicosia.

The Sector's headquarters is located at Wolseley Barracks, inside the buffer zone, near the western edge of the Venetian Walls that surround Nicosia's old town. The once-stately Ledra Palace Hotel, where Sector Two troops are stationed, has been home to UNFICYP peacekeepers since 1974, under an agreement with the Republic of Cyprus. One company-size unit is located on the ceasefire lines and patrols the buffer zone in this area.

Troop Contributing Country

United Kingdom	257
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Sector Four

Sector Four became a multinational contingent in 1995 when the Armed Forces of Hungary sent its first troops to the island. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Slovakia have contributed to UNFICYP Sector Four since 2001, when Slovakia assumed command of the Sector from the Austrian contingent. In 2004, Sector Four was strengthened by peacekeepers from Croatia. In 2010, with a contingent of peacekeepers from Serbia and in 2013 with a contingent of military personnel from Ukraine.

Up until September 2018, Sector Four was multinational with four countries contributing, these were Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia and Ukraine. On 1st September 2018, following the UN Resolution 2398, endorsing the Strategic Review of UNFICYP, Slovaks became the only Troop Contributing Country in Sector Four. The total number of deployable Slovakian peacekeepers to UNFICYP has gradually risen to 241 personnel, including 190 in Sector Four.

Troop Contributing Country

Slovakia	240
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Many of the peacekeepers have been previously deployed to operations in the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere around the world. Presently, Sector Four is commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Rudolf Rusnák.

The Sector Four headquarters is located in camp General Stefanik in Famagusta. Additionally, there are numbers of patrol bases and observation posts within its area of responsibility of the eastern section of the buffer zone. In support of the Mission and in the service of peace, two Slovak soldiers have lost their lives in Cyprus.

* Figures as of June 2021.



DEMINING



Landmines in Cyprus: The facts

Today, it is estimated that more than 7,000 anti-personnel and anti-tank mines still remain in the ground across the island of Cyprus, affecting two million square meters of land. During the events of 1963/64 and 1974 minefields were laid within and outside the buffer zone by both the Greek Cypriot National Guard and the Turkish Armed Forces. Landmines do not become inactive with age. If anything, they can become more unstable over time.

Since July 2016, UNMAS became an integral component of UNFICYP, providing dedicated expertise in mine action planning and coordination, demining capacity, quality assurance oversight, and data management for mine action information.

The objectives of UNMAS operations are: to reduce the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war; to contribute to confidence building measures; to facilitate a return to normal living conditions; and to ensure safer freedom of movement for communities, UNFICYP and United Nations partners. UNMAS also provides assistance to the Committee on Missing Persons to ensure safe access to areas it conducts activities and to UNFICYP for explosive ordnance disposal call out tasks.



United Nations demining projects

Between 2004 and 2011

27,000

Landmines cleared from the buffer zone

UNFICYP initiatives

In 2014, UNFICYP became concerned that wet weather had washed mines from outside the buffer zone into new areas inside the buffer zone. UNFICYP undertook two surveys of Suspected Mine Hazard Areas – one near Mammari and the other near Dherynia – to ensure that these sites could be given the all-clear.

UNFICYP carried out these surveys with the assistance of the UN peacekeeping mission in Lebanon and their 21-member specialist demining team from Cambodia, finding and destroying one anti-tank mine near Mammari. In May 2015, a similar operation was conducted in Mammari by a Cambodian demining team through inter-mission cooperation with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon; they cleared two anti-tank mines, four anti-tank mine components, and one anti-personnel mine fuse.

The Cambodian team went on to clear 1,847 m² around Lefka-Aplici, and also conducted a technical survey of Deryneia as part of confidence-building measures to open up new crossing points, as agreed by the leaders on 28 May 2015.

In 2019, eighteen mine sites (9 from north and 9 from south) were removed from UNMAS monitoring database and the areas are now considered mine free.



OTHER KEY UNITS

Military Observer Liaison Officers

UNFICYP currently has about twenty-eight Military Observer Liaison Officers and Sector Civilian And Military Liaison Officers serving across all three sectors. Military Observer Liaison Officers are not just UN Observers, as they are involved at all levels across the Force in daily negotiations and liaison functions with both opposing forces. The Military Observer Liaison Officers form the backbone of the way UNFICYP deals with the opposing forces, be it at Regimental level in the sectors or at the highest levels in the Headquarters in the pursuance of conflict resolution, improved communications and confidence building.

The opposing forces continue to accept Military Observer Liaison Officers, although UNFICYP does not yet have unrestricted access to opposing forces Regimental Headquarters. Sector Civilian And Military Liaison Officers are the part of the Sector Civil Affairs Teams, whose main role is support the Civil Affairs Section to provide humanitarian aid to communities left behind, return the buffer zone as far as possible to normal conditions, and support all bi-communal events. A detailed, modular training programme has been developed and is run by the Mission Training Cell to prepare Military Observer Liaison Officers and Sector Civilian And Military Liaison Officers in the mediation and negotiation skills their role requires.

The Mobile Force Reserve

Formed in 1997, the Mobile Force Reserve is UNFICYP's primary reserve and provides the Force Commander with a flexible and well-equipped force, able to respond to any situation that may arise in the buffer zone. The Mobile Force Reserve is staff with 65 peacekeepers from the United Kingdom and is held at high-readiness and trained in a variety of tasks from public order to incident response. It is able to provide support to Sectors and other elements of UNFICYP, including routine tasks such as patrolling. The MFR is equipped with a 4x4 vehicle fleet enabling deployment anywhere in the buffer zone at short notice. Based in UN Protected Area, at the old Nicosia international airport, the Reserve conducts security patrols and provides a 24/7 ambulance capability.

UN Flight Unit



UN Flight Unit has three helicopters, with two in operation at all times. The unit is based at UNFICYP headquarters and is staffed with 35 personnel from the Argentinean Air Force as an integral part of the Argentinian contingent. Using Hughes 500 and a Bell 212 helicopters, the unit conducts patrols along the buffer zone and provides logistical support for UNFICYP operations and emergency assistance such as medical evacuations, as required. In addition, with the latest incorporation of specialized personnel in the fight against fire, not only add to the capacity of aerial operations of the mission, but also can provide a quick response in case of any fire emergency within the United Nations Protected Area or outside, if necessary. The Argentinean UN Flight peacekeepers regularly demonstrate the skill and flexibility that are derived from working back home in wide-ranging and difficult terrains, such as Antarctica, the Patagonia region and the warmest areas of northern Argentina.

UN Force Protection Unit

The Force Protection Unit comprises of two distinct elements: the Force Military Police Unit and the UN Protected Area Security Platoon. Commanded by the Force Provost Marshal, the Force is, by design, a multi-national and multi-functional unit, with representation from across the military component and an island-wide remit for all policing matters involving UNFICYP personnel and property. The Unit's primary responsibilities include enforcing the Head of Mission's force protection measures, conducting initial investigations into alleged cases of misconduct and criminal activity by UN personnel, to provide investigative assistance to scenes of crime occurring within the buffer zone when there is UN personnel and property involved, and supporting perimeter security of the UN Protected Area. The Force Protection Unit's principal tenet is to deter through proactive policing and security measures in order to preserve the operational effectiveness of the force and safeguard its personnel.



Force Engineers



Engineering support to UNFICYP is provided by the Engineering and Facilities Management under the structure of the Service Delivery Pillar and consists of the Senior Engineering Assistant, the Force Engineer Office, the Force Engineers HQ Platoon, Engineering and Facilities Management Workshop, and Engineering elements from each sector. External support agencies include the Public Works Department and the Electrical Mechanical Services provided by the Republic of Cyprus. Engineers are an essential part of UNFICYP's work, with the main role aimed to construct, maintain and repair all facilities including amps, observation posts and patrol bases under the UN responsibility. Furthermore, they provide maintenance of the patrol tracks and helicopter landing sites across the buffer zone. The unit is staffed with 37 peacekeepers from Slovakia.



UNPOL



The United Nations Police (UNPOL) has been part of UNFICYP since 14th April 1964. The principal mandated task of UNPOL in UNFICYP is to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order within the buffer zone. As derived from the Mission’s mandate, UNPOL’s mandate aims “to prevent a recurrence of fighting and, as necessary, to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and a return to normal conditions”.

To perform its role in mandate delivery, UNPOL adopts a multi-dimensional strategy. It monitors and regulates civilian activities and helps in building trust between both communities by facilitating and supporting interaction between them. UNPOL also supports other components in their respective functions.

The UNPOL component is headed by UNFICYP’s Senior Police Advisor and is comprised of 69 police officers from sixteen countries and one civilian support staff. UNPOL officers are based in UNFICYP Headquarters at the United Nations Protected Area and at seven locations across the island, in or near, the buffer zone.

In accordance with the mandate, UNPOL has no executive powers. It must rely on co-operation from CYPOL (Cypriot Police) and the TCP (Turkish Cypriot Police) to fulfill the police role. UNPOL assists the Good Offices of the UN Secretary General in the implementation of measures towards achieving a comprehensive peace agreement, through the facilitation of the Technical Committee on Crime and Criminal matters, established in 2008 to launch and promote the cooperation between the local law enforcement agencies.

UNPOL services include:

- Support and maintenance of public order in the buffer zone.
- Support and monitoring of demonstrations in the buffer zone.
- Support resolution of disputes between the 2 communities in the buffer zone.
- Support access of civilians and regulation of civilian activities in the buffer zone.
- Assist police services on both sides upon request, with the investigation of criminal offences committed by non-UN personnel.
- Assist to establish mechanisms and enhance existing initiatives where necessary for increasing joint efforts on criminal matters.

Police Contributing Countries

Bosnia	5
Bulgaria	2
China	6
Finland	2
India	3
Ireland	12
Italy	4
Jordan	3
Lithuania	1
Montenegro	1
Pakistan	3
Romania	5
Russia	4
Serbia	2
Slovakia	6
Sweden	3
Ukraine	3
Total	67
(out of an authorised 69)	

Figures correct as of June 2021. Members of UNPOL are generally deployed for 12-month periods.



CIVIL AFFAIRS



The Civil Affairs Section of UNFICYP was established in 1998 to reflect the increasingly civilian nature of the issues confronting the mission. In addition to the lengthy and extensive contribution, since 2014, UNFICYP increased its ability to contribute to the facilitation of activities that promote trust between the two communities.

The Mission convenes and connects Cypriot civil society organizations with a clear understanding that the Civil Affairs contribution helps to build bridges for communication and to breakdown barriers of mistrust or misunderstanding. A sample of activities that sustain interaction and collaboration across the island include support for dialogue between women or youth, innovation and entrepreneurship, environment and culture of peace trainings, and the preservation of common cultural heritage. These actions are generated both internally by the Mission as well as externally from *ad hoc* applications of intercommunal formal or informal groups, individuals or organizations, as well as through the Cypriot Technical Committees. Civil Affairs' leverage in local community liaison put it in a prime position to facilitate confidence, trust and peace-building across the island, both within and outside the buffer zone.

Where possible, UNFICYP facilitates civilian use of the buffer zone for peaceful purposes, such as agricultural work, maintenance of public utilities and communications, and the construction of residential buildings. This management of the buffer zone for civilian purposes is performed by Civilian Activity Integrated Offices at UNFICYP headquarters and in the three Sectors through a buffer zone permit system. Over the years, Civil Affairs has contributed to allow for normal civilian life and activity in areas of the buffer zone that are deemed unlikely to increase tensions between communities.

Today, the Section is an integrated component headed by a civilian Chief of Civil Affairs and comprising of 20 civilians, eight UNPOL and eight military members, out of which seven civilians, two UNPOL and two military members are based in Nicosia, at UNFICYP headquarters.

In May 2018, international Civil Affairs Officers were redeployed to each the Mission's Sectors so that now there are 13 civilians, six UNPOL and six military personnel based in integrated offices to strengthen their capacity to mediate civilian disputes through community engagement and provide continuity of liaison and engagement, including better outreach to women in the communities, which is critical to gaining the trust of interlocutors.

The roots of the civil affairs function of UNFICYP can be traced back to the original mandate authorized by Security Council Resolution 186 (1964), in particular, the provision that the Force contribute to "a return to normal conditions" on the island.

After the events of 1974 and the resulting displacement of large numbers of the population, UNFICYP was mandated to provide humanitarian assistance to the population all across the island (Security Council Resolutions 359 and 365 and General Assembly Resolution 3212, all of 1974).

Function

Since 1998, the structure and functions of the Section have grown and evolved considerably into three main areas of activity: civil, humanitarian and community relations.

Civil

Day-to-day interlocutor with authorities on both sides on issues affecting civilian population.

Interface of the mission with local civilian authorities.

Manages civilian use of the buffer zone for agriculture and some housing and commercial uses.

Humanitarian

Provides assistance to Turkish Cypriots in south and Greek Cypriots and Maronites in north.

Delivers humanitarian supplies and ensures social welfare, educational, medical needs are being met.

Community relations

Encourages inter-communal dialogue for the purpose of confidence building and trust.

Promotes preservation of common cultural heritage.

Facilitates technical level cooperation.

Facilitates access to religious sites on both sides (upon formal request of organisers).



GENDER AFFAIRS



Women's participation in peace and security is crucial to achieving sustainable solutions to conflict, and to preventing new conflicts from emerging. In 2000, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1325 on women, peace and security; the landmark resolution recognises the impact of conflict on women and calls on member states to ensure women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. It urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspective in all areas of peace building.

Through our Gender Affairs Office, and with guidance and support from the Gender Unit of the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support, UNFICYP facilitates discussions, activities and advocacy aimed at increasing women's participation in the Cyprus peace process and more broadly, supports efforts to boost gender equality on the island.

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

UNFICYP is committed to ensuring the highest standards of conduct, professionalism and accountability of all its peacekeeping personnel deployed in Cyprus. UNFICYP personnel and UN contractual workers must treat the local population with respect and dignity at all times. Implicit in this is the requirement to protect civilians, in particular vulnerable groups such as women and children. Sexual exploitation and Sexual Abuse (SEA) are acts of unacceptable behavior and prohibited conduct for all UN personnel.

Where do I report sexual exploitation and abuse involving UN personnel?

Where do I report SEA involving UN personnel?

Any cases or suspicions of SEA involving UN personnel should be reported to:

Mail address: Conduct and Discipline and SEA Team, UNFICYP Headquarters, P.O. Box 25644, 1311 Nicosia, Cyprus

Telephone: +357-22614441 / +357-22614527 / +961 | 926215

Mobile Phone: +357 97653345 / + 357 99211841 / 961 78986648

E-mail: yahyan@un.org OR costachel@un.org OR ndaoa@un.org OR unifil-cdu@un.org

Online: <https://oios.un.org/report-wrongdoing>

It is strictly prohibited for all UNFICYP personnel to engage in:

Any act of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, or any other form of sexually humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.

Any type of sexual activities with children (persons under the age of 18 years). Mistaken belief as to the age of a person is not a defence.

Use of children or adults to procure sexual services for others.

Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex with prostitutes or others.

Visit to brothels or an establishment where prostitution and sexual exploitation takes place.

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