

# GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



Apr - Jun 2017





# DEAR READERS!

Welcome to the 151st edition of the Golan Journal which covers the period from the 1st of April to the 30th June 2017. This is my first edition as the Editor and I would like to thank my predecessor Comdt Patrick Toye for his work on previous publications; I would also like to thank all of my colleagues who have contributed to this publication and hope that you the reader finds this edition of the Golan Journal enjoyable and informative. There are two main themes that we cover in this edition of the Golan Journal; firstly, we reflect on the sacrifices made by peacekeepers throughout the world as we celebrate International Peacekeeper's Day. This solemn day was held on the 29th May 2017 and allowed the United Nations (UN) to commemorate those who have given their lives in the service of peace and also acknowledge the tremendous work that is ongoing in sixteen UN peacekeeping missions across four continents. While the investment in peacekeeping is substantial for the men and women of the UN, their families and the Troop Contributing Countries (TCC); we believe this investment has allowed nations to flourish in an atmosphere of peace and security. The second theme covered in this edition is the training required by TCCs to operate in the challenging environment of peacekeeping. We have an article on the pre-deployment training of UNDOF's Force Reserve Company (FRC) made of troops from the Irish Defence Forces. The article covers the different phases of training they go through in order to

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be deemed operationally ready to deploy overseas. This edition also features articles on the ongoing work of Observer *Maj Bijay, Comdt Brennan and Sgt Delana* Group Golan (OGG), introduces some of the new personnel serving in the mission area, and reflects on the national culture of our TCCs, including an introduction to the Nepalese Gorkha Khukri. We pay tribute to our Fiji Batt colleagues who received their UNDOF service medals and in our medical corner, we look at the importance of personal and food hygiene along with an information fact sheet on Body Mass Index (BMI). The UNDOF media cell is in the final stages of completing a new UNDOF website and we expect that this website will go live in the coming weeks. The website will give the general public a greater understanding of the UNDOF mandate and the role UNDOF plays in ensuring peace and stability in the region. It also aims to be an accessible source for former colleagues to keep up to date with what is going on in the mission and allow them to reflect on their time here. Its aim, like that of our publication of the Golan Journal, is to provide accurate and timely information to our readers.



Yours sincerely,  
**Comdt Padraig Brennan (SSO Media & PR)**



[www.undof.unmissions.org](http://www.undof.unmissions.org)

#### Editorial Office:

UNDOF HQ  
 CAMP ZIOUANI  
 E-Mail: [undof-sso-media-pr@un.org](mailto:undof-sso-media-pr@un.org)



#### Editorial Staff:

*Editor in Chief*  
*SSO Media PR*  
 Comdt Padraig Brennan

#### Deputy Editor

*SOPR*  
 Major Bijay Bhandari

#### Editor and Layout Designer

Sgt Tomasi Delana

**Online edition:** <http://undof.unmissions.org>

The Golan Journal is the magazine of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and it is intended to provide information about the Force and events within it which are of interest to its members. The UNDOF Media/Public Relations Office publishes the Golan Journal quarterly. While articles and photographs are welcomed from all members of the Force, the view and opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily coincide with those of the United Nations or the Force Commander.

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# Force Commander/Head of Mission's Message



FC/HOM UNDOF



**I**t is my honour as UNDOF Force Commander and Head of Mission to once again address my UNDOF colleagues and Golan Journal readers. I would particularly like to welcome all new colleagues to the mission and wish them a safe and fulfilling time with UNDOF.

The last three months continues to see significant progress in the development and reoccupation of Camp Faouar and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all personnel, both civilian and military, for their endeavours in ensuring that UNDOF meets the obligations of its assigned mandate.

A significant occasion during the last three months was when on the 29th May, the United Nations celebrated International Peacekeeper's Day. This occasion was marked by all sixteen missions across four continents. UNDOF marked the occasion with a parade and wreath laying ceremony in Camp Ziouani.

The International Peacekeeper's Day was established in 2002 by the United Nations General Assembly to honour the memory

of the UN peacekeepers who have lost their lives in the service of peace and pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in UN peacekeeping operations for their high level of professionalism, dedication and courage.

Since the first UN peacekeeping mission was established in 1948 almost 3,500 military, police and civilian personnel have lost their lives in the service of peace as a result of acts of violence, accidents and disease. 59 UNDOF personnel have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of peace and we pay tribute to them and their families.

Peacekeeping is an investment in global peace, security, and prosperity. It is a flagship enterprise of the United Nations. Today, the UN deploys more than 113,000 military, police and civilian personnel in 16 peacekeeping operations across the world. It is a flexible, evolving instrument that brings together political, security and technical tools to assist countries make the difficult transition from conflict to peace.

Over time, peacekeeping has grown from simply monitoring ceasefires to protecting civilians, disarming ex-combatants, protecting human rights, promoting the rule of law, supporting free and fair elections, minimizing the risk of land-mines and so much more. Peacekeepers have also worked to ensure that women are fully represented in peace processes, political life, and in branches of government including in uniformed services. All of these efforts are fundamental investments in building lasting peace.

As we strive forward in the achievement of our mission and face difficult challenges on a daily basis, it is wise to take stock of the sacrifices made by all those who have gone before us and acknowledge the present sacrifices made by our colleagues, families and friends. The achievement of international peace and security comes with a price but it is a price worth investing in.

**Major-General Jai Shanker Menon**  
**Force Commander/Head of Mission UNDOF**



## DFC's Words



Dear colleagues and friends, the first half of 2017 has passed very quickly and we are heading towards an extremely interesting autumn and winter. Recent activities on the Golan remind us again how important it is to be prepared and properly trained. As you all know - planning and preparation prevents poor performance. We must not forget to include training into our plans and constantly arrange exercises and drills in order to be ready for all eventualities. Training initiatives like our Table Top Exercise in FHQ and MEDEVAC exercise in Hermon Complex are to be commended and I call on all our personnel, both civilian and military, to strive towards greater excellence in training. Peacekeeping training, as defined by the UN, is any training activity that aims to enhance mandate implementation by equipping UN military, police or civilian personnel, both individually and collectively, with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to:

a) Meet the evolving challenges of peacekeeping operations in accordance with DPKO/

DFS principles, policies and guidelines, as well as lessons learnt from the field

- b) Perform their specialist functions in an effective, professional and integrated manner
- c) Demonstrate the core values and competencies of the UN

I would like to add one additional point that is of utmost importance and that is safety and security. We have to make sure that everybody is well trained on safety and security measures. Every contingent and section must ensure their personnel are familiar with bunker drills and the rendering of first aid. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of proper hand over / takeover procedures during the rotation of personnel, and the conduct of induction training that ensures incoming personnel are brought up to speed with UNDOF safety and security measures. The upcoming arrival of new troops from Nepal that will form a Mechanized Company will give greater flexibility and capability to the mission. New capabilities and resources brings with it new demands for training and cooperation amongst all personnel. I call upon our operational leadership to continue to put in place real-life training scenarios that challenge our personnel and ensure we meet our aim of 'One Mission, One Team, One Goal'. Not all training requires the involvement of large scale resources and planning. Each and every one of us has the capacity to improve and enhance our knowledge, skills and self-awareness. As we say in Finland, 'Every training matters'. Our training, no matter the scale of this training, should be recorded and noted by FHQ. This will improve our training database and allow the FHQ to direct training resources to areas that need it the most. In conclusion, I would like to highlight a very important point; the challenges we face are real and not to be taken lightly. These challenges should be met with enthusiasm, motivation and caution. We must walk before we can run. I would like to finish by welcoming all new members to our Mission and wish you a joyful and safe tour of duty.

"Safety First" "Look good, Do good"

**Brigadier-General Mauri Tapani Koskela**  
**Deputy Force Commander**

# International Peacekeepers Day

On the 29th May 2017, UNDOF hosted a parade and wreath laying ceremony to honour the memory of the UN peacekeepers who have lost their lives in the service of peace and pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in UN peacekeeping operations for their high level of professionalism, dedication and courage.



DFC Brig Gen Koskela laying the wreath to honour the memory of fallen peacekeepers



DFC Brig Gen Tapani Mauri Koskela and Ms. Aine Joyce lay wreaths on behalf of all UNDOF personnel



Lieutenant Joeli Logavatu Fiji Batt 4 raises the UN flag during the ceremony

## New Faces

Lieutenant Colonel David Cowhig joined UNDOF on 29th March 2017 as the Officer Commanding the Force Reserve Company. Lt Col Cowhig is from Fermoy, Co. Cork but has been living in Kilkenny for many years. He joined the Irish Defence Forces in 1981. He has spent most of his career in Infantry Units, primarily the 3rd Infantry Battalion. He has served as Operations/ Training Officer at the Defence Forces Training Centre and as an Instructor in the Defence Forces Military College.

His most recent appointment was as the Registrar and Officer in Charge of External Validation at the Defence Forces Training and Education Branch. Lt Col Cowhig has extensive overseas experience having served in UNIFIL, ONUCI, and Formation HQ of Nordic Battle Group 2015 (Sweden). Lt Col Cowhig has completed a Master's Degree in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies as part of his Senior Command and Staff Course. He is married to Eileen and they have a son, Art.



Lieutenant Colonel Sjoerd Volcklandt joined UNDOF as Chief Liaison Officer on the 21st April 2017. He was born on the 12th December 1968, in Zaandam, Netherlands. He joined the Netherlands Armed Forces in 1989 and passed the Royal Military Academy in 1994 and was appointed as an artillery officer. In the first 12 years of his career he fulfilled several operational positions in both a mechanized and airmobile brigade. Lt Col Volcklandt was Operations Officer/2IC Sector2East during the mission UNFICYP in 1999. In 2005 he went to IRAQ with his battery to man the weapon location radars on the three Dutch camps in the AOR. Since his graduation from the Dutch Command and General Staff College in 2012, Lt Col Volcklandt has held an Executive Master's Degree on Security and Defense. In September 2015 he was assigned as Chief of Staff of the Army Training and Education Command. Lt Col Volcklandt is married and has two sons. He likes sports such as running, swimming and cycling.



Lieutenant Colonel Nitesh Kumar joined UNDOF on the 4th May 2017 as Deputy Chief Integrated Service Support (DCISS). Lt Col Kumar has varied operational and logistics experience having served as Platoon Commander and Company Commander in Counter insurgency/Counter Terrorism operations in Northern Theatre, High Altitude area along Sino-Indian border in Eastern Theatre, Desert Sector and obstacle ridden terrain Sector in Western Theatre. The officer has also been part of Indian Military Training Team in Bhutan as an Instructor responsible for imparting training to officers and men of the Royal Bhutan Armed Forces. He has a Bachelor in Science from HP University Shimla and Masters in Defense Studies from Madras University, Chennai. He also holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Mil Studies & Def Management from HNB Garhwal University. The officer is a keen sportsman and enjoys adventure sports. He has undertaken basic skill courses in Skiing, Water Sports and Para Jumps. He is fond of reading and listening to music.

## New Faces



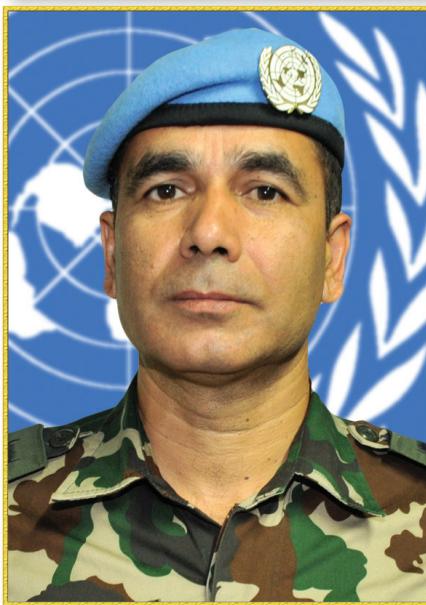
**L**t Col Sandeep Kumar Shaurya Chakra joined UNDOF on 28th May 2017 as MA to the Force Commander. He is an Infantry officer with vast experience in counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations where he distinguished himself as a company commander and was awarded with Shaurya Chakra and Chief of Army Staff commendation card for gallantry.

He has served in many staff appointments which include U1, U2 and U3 branches at tactical level and U3 branch appointment at strategic level. He has also served as an instructor in Young Officers Wing at Infantry School. He is an alumnus of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, India where he qualified for a Master's degree in Defence and Strategic Analysis. He also holds a Master's Degree in Plant Genetics from Haryana Agricultural University. Lt Col Sandeep Kumar, SC is married to Sushila and has two children. His hobbies include reading and running.



**L**ieutenant Colonel Tadhg Murray was born on the 31 December 1969 in Cork, Ireland. He is a graduate of the Cadet School, Military College and was commissioned in 1990 to the Transport Corps. Lt Col Murray is an alumnus of National University of Ireland (NUI) Maynooth where he was awarded a Masters of Arts Degree in Leadership Management and Defence Studies. Lt Col Murray's most recent appointment was in the Conciliation and Arbitration Section in the Irish Defence Forces Human Resources Department.

Prior to this appointment, Lt Col Murray served as Executive Officer for the 45 Inf Gp deployed in UNIFIL. Lt Col Murray has extensive overseas service with six tours of duty completed with UNIFIL. Additionally, he served with the Multi-National Task Force Centre in Kosovo in 2007. Lt Col Murray is married to Debora and has two children, Jack and Rowan. He is actively involved in his local community and has a keen interest in all sport, including rugby and golf.



**L**t Col Dibas Raj Regmi joined the Mission on 26th June 2017 and took over the appointment of CITO. He was born in 1970 in Parbat, Nepal and joined the Nepalese Army in 1991. He has commanded a Brigade Signal Company and an independent Infantry Company. Lt Col Regmi Commanded a Signal Battalion for 2 years and has staff experience at Army Headquarters. He has completed numerous military courses including Commando Training, Regimental Signal Officers Course, Company Commander Course, and the Command & Staff College courses.

He has also completed Signal Young Officer's Course in the Military College of Telecommunication Engineering, India and Officers Electronic Warfare Course from Military College of Signals, Pakistan. Lt Col Regmi served with UNIFIL as a Pl Commander, with MONUC and UNAMID as an Ops Staff Officer. He has completed an MA in Political Science from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. He is Married to Linu Regmi and has two children.

## New Faces



**M**ajor Janne Lehtonen joined the UNDOF operation on the 1st June 2017 as Military Assistant (MA) to the Deputy Force Commander. He was born in Vilppula, Finland in 1973 and joined the Finnish Army in 1998. Major Lehtonen has a broad range of experience in peacekeeping operations having served as a Military Observer in UNMOGIP and as a Staff officer in the NATO led ISAF operation. Prior to taking up his current appointment he worked at the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT). In his role as a course director he was responsible for the military observer training for all the Nordic students. He has also worked for two years at the Swedish Army International Training Centre (SWEDINT) as a liaison officer and course director for their Battalion Staff Officer course. Major Lehtonen is married to Tarja and has one son, Opi.



**R**egimental Sergeant Major (RSM) John Murray joined UNDOF on the 29th March 2017 and is the senior NCO with the Force Reserve Company. RSM Murray is from Newbridge Co. Kildare, Ireland. He joined the Irish Defence Forces in January 1978 and has served in a number of different units in the Irish Defence Forces including the 6th Field Signal Company and as RSM to the Communication Information Service Corps. RSM Murray has completed 15 overseas tours with the Defence Forces to such places as UNIFIL, KFOR, ISAF, EUFOR Althea (Bosnia) and UNSOM. RSM Murray has a long family history in the Defence Forces dating back to his Grandfather Christopher (Kit) Murray who served with the Royal Irish Fusilier's and also served alongside General Michael Collins. RSM Murray is married and has a daughter, Elaine.



**S**gt Vetaia Codrokadroka was born on 17 December 1970. He hails from the village of Narewa, Nadi, in the Western part of Fiji. He enlisted in the Republic of Fiji Military Forces in 1991. He has been serving with the Republic of Fiji Military Forces for 25 years. In 1991, at the age of 20, he served in his first UN mission with the First Fiji Infantry Regiment, in UNIFIL. Since then, SGT Codrokadroka has served in various UN missions including UNMISSET (East Timor), UNAMI (Iraq) and MFO Sinai, Egypt. SGT CODROKADROKA is currently holding the appointment of Platoon Sergeant, Fiji Battalion Mobile Reserve (BMR Pl). He is married and with three children. He is a keen sportsman and enjoys rugby, socialising and spending time with his wife and children.



**P**te Ram Krishna Khatri of the Kali Bhanjan Battalion 'E' (NEPCON-V UNDOF) was born on the 12th June 1987 in Ramechlap, Nepal. He joined the Nepalese Armed Forces on the 2nd August 2006. He is married with one (1) Daughter. He is currently employed as an EOD soldier with NEPCON. He has completed training to NCO Cadre Grade- III and is qualified in Field Engineering, Brick laying and Counter IED. His hobbies include reading, playing football and basketball.

# FORCE RESERVE COMPANY PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING

**Members of Irish Defence Forces 55th Infantry Group complete rigorous training in advance of their deployment to the Golan**

The UNDOF Force Reserve Company (FRC) began life as the Irish Defence Forces 55th Infantry Group in January 2017. As a Unit they commenced their collective training in January but as professional soldiers their skills and experience have been developed through years of training and development in the Irish Defence Forces.

On first addressing his newly formed Unit, Lt Col David Cowhig, Officer Commanding the 55th Infantry Group emphasised the importance of the upcoming pre-deployment training and the need for all personnel to be aware of the significant challenge that lay ahead, both in terms of the training to be completed and the deployment to the mission area.

Irish Defence Forces overseas pre-deployment training for the 55th Infantry Group was governed under Training Circular (TC) 14/ 2016.

This TC was approved by the Director of Defence Forces Training on behalf of the Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations). The TC outlines the three phases of overseas pre-deployment training the Unit must complete, along with the assessment and verification process that confirms a Unit is ready to deploy overseas.

Phase 1 of overseas training is completed within Corps, and at Home Units and Formations prior to the formation up of the Overseas Unit. Mandatory requirements for overseas selection and deployments such as fitness testing, range practices and medicals are completed during this phase. Training specific to individual appointments may also be conducted at this time. This could include such courses as the Emergency Medical Trauma Course, Fire Support Team course, Fox-track ground surveillance radar course and a Light Tactical Armoured Vehicle (LTAV) Suite course.



Comdt Donal Burke DCO leading an 'O' Group

Having successfully completed Phase 1, the Unit comes together to complete Phase 2 and Phase 3 of their Infantry Group training. Phase 2 sees the Unit focus on tactical and technical proficiency; the Unit is put through its paces in areas such as Peace Support Operations (PSO), support weapons training, MOWAG APC mounting and dismount drills, Live Fire Tactical Training (LFTT), Counter IED training and Communication Information Systems (CIS) training. Phase 2 also sees the Unit receive briefs and lectures that aim to ensure that all ranks are both operationally and culturally aware of the mission they are deploying to. This part of Phase 2 training is conducted in the United Nations Training School Ireland (UNTSI). UNTSI is a sub-Unit of the Military College and an internationally recognised United Nations training institution.

Phase 3, the evaluation phase, is the final stage of training and culminates in a two (2) week long Mission Readiness Exercise (MRX). This verification and validation phase is an external assessment of the Units preparedness.



*Irecon troops mine clearance exercise*



*FRC conducting contact drills during pre-deployment training*

Based in the Glen of Imaal, Co. Wicklow, the MRX is, in the main, a scenario based training assessment geared towards mimicking the hazards and risks that potentially may await Units during their deployment overseas. The MRX tests individual soldiers, platoons and the Company on all aspects of their leadership, skills, training and equipment under pressurised situations in harsh conditions. The successful completion of the MRX is a red letter day for the Unit and is the last hurdle to be cleared before deployment. This systemised approach to overseas pre-deployment training provides the leadership of the Irish Defence Forces with the assurance that their Troops have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to take on the variety of challenges that working in an overseas environment such as UNDOF will offer. It also provides the Unit Commander with the confidence that the personnel under his command meet the highest professional standards of the Irish Defence Forces.

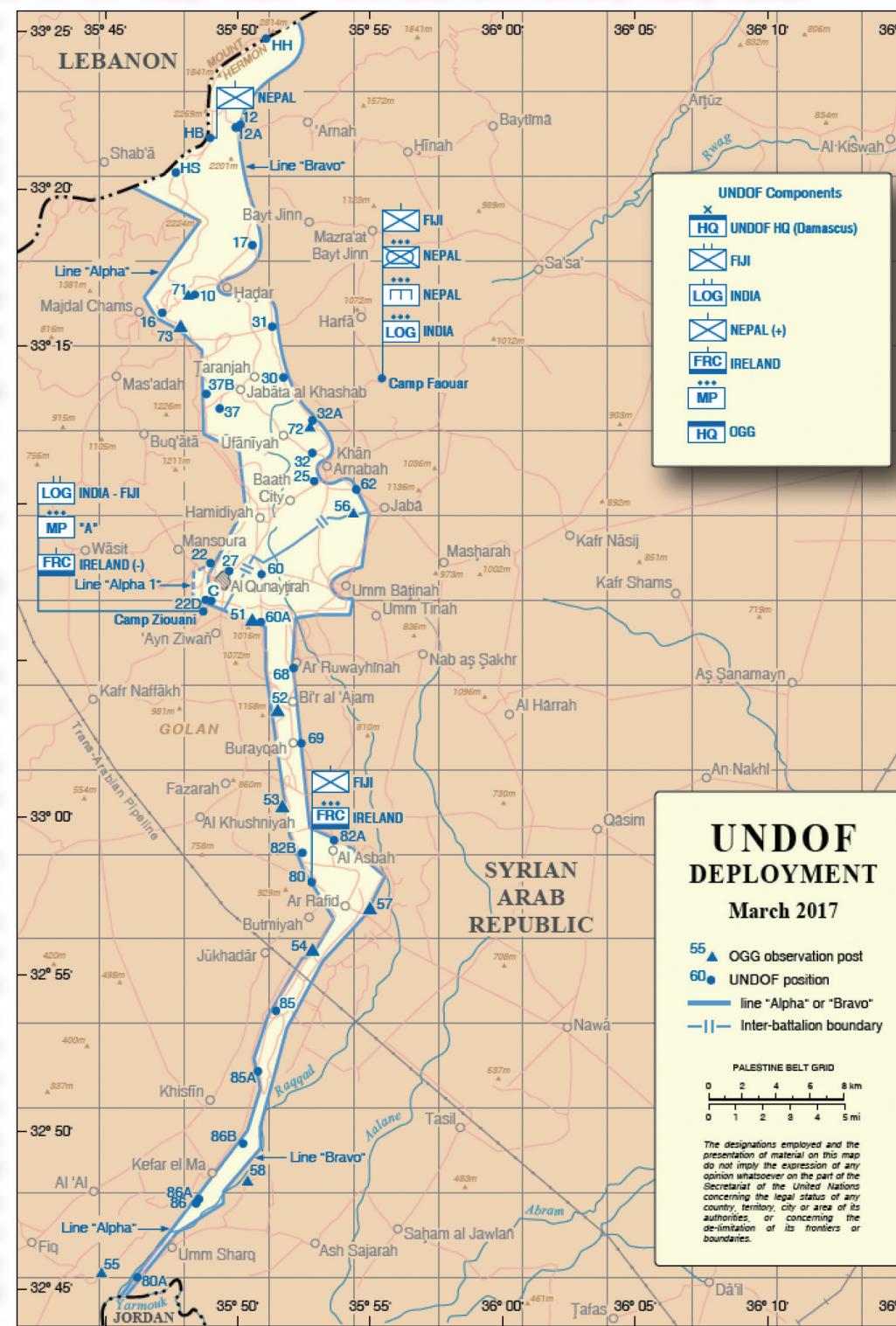
*Article by Lieutenant Patrick Wilson*

# UNDOF An ever-evolving mission

UN peacekeeping has changed since the deployment of the first mission in 1948. Over the decades peacekeeping has evolved from the classical monitoring and reporting missions that were established in the aftermath of inter-state conflicts, to the integrated and complex missions that we see today. Peacekeeping globally has become more diverse and multidimensional. In order to be able to cope with today's realities, UN Peacekeeping has implemented a series of reforms in order to be 'fit for purpose' and to continue to strive for greater performance, efficiency and cost-effectiveness. UNDOF was established four decades ago, in 1974, as an inter-state monitoring and observing peacekeeping mission. Since the start of the conflict in Syria in 2011, UNDOF has had to face operational realities that have required the ongoing adaptation of the Mission's activities and its support mechanisms to the realities on the ground – without a change in the mandate and scope of the mission. Worldwide financial pressures has also impacted the United Nations and has required a lean approach that has to be reconciled with the need to innovate and use modern technolo-

gies. However, the Mission remains steadfast to the achievement of its mandate has never been more relevant than in these turbulent times.

Throughout these times UNDOF has continued to resupply its positions on Mount Hermon and, more recently, Camp Faouar.





UNDOF convoys between Damascus and various posts are conducted almost daily and with an UNDOF security escort, accompanied by a liaison officer from the office of the Senior Syrian Arab Delegate. UNDOF continues to carry out contingency planning for the reinforcement and evacuation of United Nations positions and observation posts and to update its contingency planning for the relocation and evacuation of United Nations personnel on both the Alpha and Bravo sides. Both parties to the agreement are keen for

keepers will be the foremost consideration on deciding when this return date will be. Members of UNDOF, both past and present, military and civilian, are the force that has kept UNDOF and the UN effective, successful, and relevant.

It is their effort and accomplishments that ensures UNDOF is a dependable, trustworthy and effective force in maintaining peace on the Golan. The UN Secretary General Mr. Antonio Guterres continues to express his profound appreciation to UNDOF's military



*Force Commander & Head of Mission Maj Gen Jai Shanker Menon briefing troops in Camp Faouar*

UNDOF to return to the Area of Separation as soon as the situation permits. This is a strong and reassuring sign of their commitment to the Disengagement Agreement and of their appreciation of the role played by UNDOF in maintaining stability in the region.

UNDOF is at an advanced stage of the planning process for a return to the Area of Separation. However, the unpredictable nature of the conflict pose significant challenges in the planning process. Despite these challenges, and with the continued cooperation of our Troop Contributing Countries (TCC), UNDOF will fully redeploy to the Bravo side at the earliest opportunity. The safety and security of all military and civilian peace-

and civilian personnel, including those from Observer Group Golan UNTSO, for their service in an increasingly challenging operational environment.

He has underscored the important contribution UNDOF's continued presence makes to peace and security in the Middle East. As at 15 June 2017, UNDOF is comprised of 830 troops, including 33 women.

Troops are currently deployed from Bhutan, the Czech Republic, Fiji, Finland, India, Ireland, Nepal and the Netherlands. In addition, 72 military observers from Observer Group Golan UNTSO, including 8 female observers, assist in the Force's tasks.

*Article by Ms. Halla Moufti, UNDOF HQ*

# DEVELOPMENTS AT OGG-D

**O**n 23 April 2017, after 12 months, Lieutenant Colonel Timo Mellin, from Sweden, handed over the command of the Observer Group Golan – Damascus (OGG-D) to Commander Tapio Lineri from Finland.

The change of command ceremony took place at ISMAC House in Damascus, and was officiated at by the UNTSO Head of Mission and Chief of Staff, Major General David Gawn.

The ceremony was also attended by Brigadier General Younis, of the Syrian Armed Forces, and by the Swedish Ambassador to Syria, His Excellency Mr Milad Atieh. Guests from both UNDOF and UNTSO National

Staff were also in attendance. As a part of the ceremony, Major General Gawn presented UNTSO medals to qualified UNMOs.

Major General Gawn warmly thanked Lieutenant Colonel Mellin for his outstanding work that has resulted in the re-deployment of OGG-D Headquarters to Syria as well as the generation of Team Mountain.

UNTSO COS also welcomed the new Chief OGG-D. This ceremony again underlined the unique and close relationship that OGG-D enjoys with both UNTSO and UNDOF colleagues based on B-Side; a special bond that is evident with all the UNTSO national staff.



*Chief Observer Group Golan – Damascus Change of Command (OGGD Staff with UNTSO Head of Mission and Chief of Staff, Maj Gen David Gawn and Swedish Ambassador to Syria, His Excellency Mr Milad Atieh)*



OGG-D



# DEVELOPMENTS AT OGG-D

On the 24th of April 2017, after having completed the necessary preparations and training, OGG-D resumed operations on the Mount Hermon Complex. With a re-generated Team Mountain consisting of both

experienced and newly arrived UNMOs, OGG-D is now able to permanently station UNMOs at UNP12A from which they are able to conduct daily car patrols and temporary OPs in order to enhance the Situational Awareness of UNTSO and UNDOF in the northern Area of Separation/Area of Limitation.



*Captain Jerry Nilsson (SWE), Captain Georg Heuzeroth (CHE), Captain Jakob Jenson (DEN) and Captain Petri Heinikoski (FIN) learning about UNDOF alpine capabilities the Nepalese Contingent Mountain Company*

The force generation of Team Mountain is the product of some outstanding cooperation between Team Mountain and the UNDOF Nepalese Contingent Mountain Company.

NEPCON not only support Team Mountain with dedicated security teams when patrolling on the Hermon Complex, they also administer snow clearing activities, convoy security, and supply food and fuel.

Finally, UNTSO OGG is also preparing for possible future operations once the seasonal deployment to the Mount Hermon Complex ceases at the end of the year.

As part of this preparation, OGG-D members participated in several UNDOF reconnaissance patrols to locations on the B-Side; including Camp FAOUAR and former UNTSO OPs, OP56, OP71 and OP72.



*Captain Jerry Nilsson (SWE) and Major Enrique Brachetti (ARG) conducting observation of the Areas of Separation and Limitation from a temporary observation post high on Mount Hermon*

# FRC HANDOVER/TAKEOVER

## New Unit takes up the Challenge

The Handover/Takeover of the Force Reserve Company (FRC) which marks the 54th and 55th Infantry Group's (Ireland) rotation was held in Camp Ziouani on the 3rd April 2017. The outgoing Commanding Officer, Lt Col Mary Carroll handed over to Lt Col David Cowhig in the presence of Chief of Staff (COS), UNDOF, Col Chok Bahadur Dhakal who officiated at the ceremony.



*Lt Col Mary Carroll handover command to Lt Col David Cowhig the new FRC CO*



HANDOVER



## OGG-T CHANGE OF COMMAND

On 24 May 2017, Lt Col Torben Vahr Nielsen (Danish Armed Forces) took over as Chief Observer Group Golan Tiberias (COGG-T) from Lt Col Christine Heggli (Swiss Armed Forces) in a ceremony in the MAC House, Tiberias. The ceremony was officiated by Col Eamon Caulfield, Deputy Chief of Staff UNTSO. Col Caulfield also presented medals to UNTSO members who have successfully spent at least 90 days in the mission. During the ceremonies Col Caulfield thanked Lt Col Heggli for her outstanding service to UNTSO and wished Lt Col Nielsen a successful 12 months in his new appointment.



*Incoming COGGT, Lt Col Torben Vahr Nielsen with outgoing COGGT Lt Col Christine Heggli Cowhig the new FRC CO*



*Col Eamon Caulfield, Deputy Chief of Staff UNTSO addresses guests and personnel on parade*



# KHUKURI-THE NEPALESE GORKHA KNIFE

Some of the famous knives of the world such as the Bowie knife, the Stiletto, the Scimitar, the Roman Sword, and the Machete have all at one time or the other played great historical roles as formidable weapons where warriors and soldiers demonstrated raw power and courage during times of battle; the Khukuri stands alongside these great knives. The Khukuri is not only the national knife of Nepal but is also symbolic of the Gorkha (also spelled as Gurkhas) Soldier.

The Khukuri is a proud symbol of Nepal with every household having one at hand. The Khukuri is kept inside a leather scabbard and made from frog skin leather with a metal cape. The Khukuri typically has two sharp curves. Many Nepali Hindu followers believe that it is the symbol of Gorkhanath, the God of the Gorkhas, however in reality the curves were designed simply to prevent the blood from flowing towards the handle after the weapon is used to kill prey. There are other such curved grooves in the Khukuri at the top and the main blade of the weapon which are said to be a Trident of the Hindu

God Shiva, the Destroyer. The practical reason for the grooves is also to allow the blood to drip efficiently. The blood groove is the butt cap of the knife which resembles the eye of God and represents his omnipresence. The sheath contains two small knives, one to make fire and the other to sharpen the Khukuri. After the Anglo war of 1815 and the recruitment of the Gorkhas into the British Army, the Khukuri gained wider publicity. It was created for the sole purpose of self-defense and later became the main weapon of the Gorkhas. It is a part of the uniform of the Nepalese Soldiers; this is also the case with the British Gorkha and the Indian Gorkha regiments. The Gorkhas famously used the Khukuri during the Falklands War against

Argentina. Once taken out of the Gorkha soldier's sheath, it can only be returned after a religious ceremony called "Kharo Jagauni" has taken place. The Khukuri has undoubtedly proven itself as a masterful weapon that is a symbol of Nepal; its art, culture and traditions.



*Khukuri - the Gorkha knife*



*Sentry duties at Mount Hermon Complex in the Bravo side with their Gorkha Knife Article by Captain Kuldeep Kunwar*

# HOW I MET SYRIA

On Tuesday, February 14th, my Commanding Officer informed me that I would lead a Logbatt Advance Party to the Golan to take up our appointments with the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). In keeping with this romantic day, I very much had a romantic notion of what such a deployment would entail. I would soon learn that the deployment would be one of the most challenging experiences of my military career. I led an advance party of 36 personnel, made up of experienced and technically proficient soldiers, to take on this challenge and lead the way for a smooth transition of command. Our induction would take place in theatre, so time was of the essence in our preparations. Having received my orders I immediately began planning my deployment. The interesting part of being posted to

ties during their deployment to UNDOF and in particular Camp Faouar. We deployed to UNDOF on the 9th March 2017 and were received in Camp Faouar with professionalism and courtesy. It was clear from the outset that our predecessors had done an excellent job in reviving the Camp and it would be our job to continue the task of restoring the Camp to its former glory. As we became familiar with our work environment it was clear that our



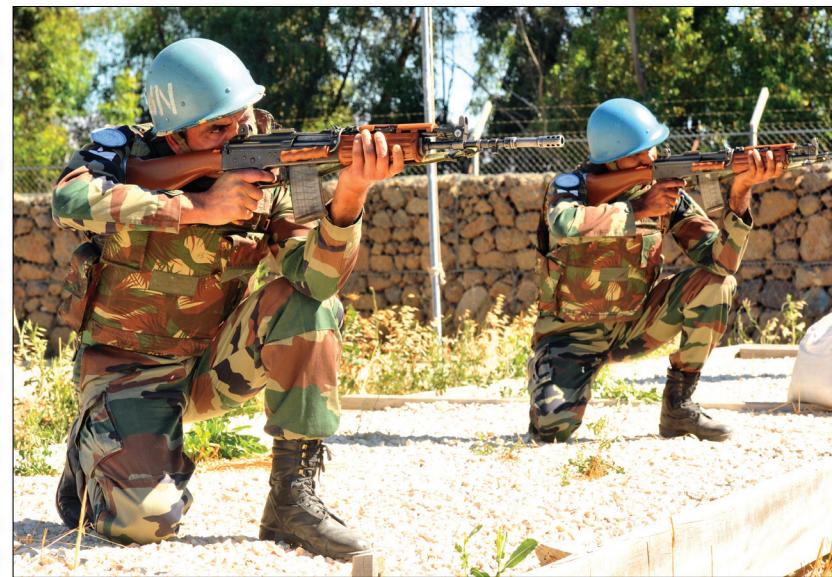
Major Gaurav Ashdir

role would require the assistance and cooperation of our UN colleagues; both military and civilian, and from all Troop Contributing Countries (TCC). We commenced significant work on the construction of shelters, the paving of new roads, and the construction and reoccupation of warehouses and stores. Our tour of duty to date has been both challenging and rewarding. We continue our mission to meet the intent of the Force Commander and strive towards the UNDOF mantra of; ONE MISSION, ONE TEAM, ONE GOAL



Section of Logbatt troops conducting training

UNDOF was that my colleague, Capt. Prashant Pathak, was already deployed to the mission. The obvious thing to do was to contact Capt. Pathak and get a firsthand account of the complexities of the situation in the Golan and the main role undertaken by Indian Forces in the mission. Capt. Pathak was instrumental in the reoccupation of Camp Faouar and his knowledge and experience would prove invaluable in how I went about achieving my Commander's intent. Capt. Pathak gave a comprehensive briefing which belayed some of the concerns I had about the deployment. It also allowed me to inform those under my command of their roles and responsibili-



Logbatt conducting live firing exercise

# DEPLOYMENT OF BUSHMASTER PROTECTED MOBILITY VEHICLES TO POSITION 80

On Monday 22nd May 2017 Fiji Batt deployed four Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicles (PMV) to Position 80. The deployment is an important part in the overall UNDOF relocation plan to the Bravo Side. These four PMV's were deployed together with an additional twenty personnel from Fiji Batt and Log Batt to Position 80. Fiji Batt has been conducting intensive training for all qualified PMVs operators and maintenance personnel in advance of the move to Position 80. The Crews have been drilled in areas such as Ground Hog, Stand Too and Extraction.



*The four Bushmaster PMVs arrived in Position 80 on Monday, 22 May 2017*



*Maj Letia Raisua (OC 2nd Company) conducting Bushmaster training with Company personnel*



*The four Bushmaster PMVs were deployed to provide cover during crossing to Position 80*

# FIJI BATT MEDAL PARADE

UNDOF Head of Mission and Force Commander, Maj General Jai Shanker Menon presided over the medal parade for Fijian Peacekeepers on Friday, 22nd April 2017. Maj General Menon



Colour Party leading the march at Camp Ziouani square

was the senior dignitary at the parade and conferred service recognition medals during this prestigious event to members of Fijian Battalion 4. It is the norm in the Military to honor men and women in uniform who selflessly serve with pride and loyalty. This is a well-established tradition to show appreciation of the tireless dedication to duty by uniformed members.



Pte Tinairagasa congratulated by FC after medal presentation at CZ



Commanding Officer Fiji Batt Lt Col Ravunakana welcoming the Force Commander and Head of Mission Maj Gen Jai Shanker Menon (Chief Guest) to the Camp Faouar medal parade

Addressing the recipients, Major General Menon remarked; *"I have closely monitored the activities of all contingents under my command and I am proud to say that Fiji Batt 4 have excelled in the role as loyal,*



*FC presents the UNDOF medal to WO2 Ashrit Lal at Camp Faouar dedicated and committed Peacekeepers in all the areas and responsibilities assigned to them. The fingerprints of Fiji Batt 4 are all over the mission from the resupplying of Hermon positions in the north to providing security to OGG personnel in the south". The Force Commander went on to say; "I wish to recognize at this stage the role that Fiji Batt played in the re-occupation of Camp Faouar on 15th November 2016, and in doing so, Fiji Batt 4 have accomplished a remarkable task that has ensured the mission's future existence".*



*FC awarding the Fiji Batt Chaplain with the UNDOF medal (CZ)*

Maj Gen Mennor sincerely thanked the Fijian Government for its commitment and support to the UNDOF mission, in particular, the provision of Bushmasters to the 4th Battalion 1st Fiji Infantry regiment (1 FIR) on 27th March 2017. The delivery and operation of the Bushmasters is featured in this edition of the Golan Journal.

Maj Gen Mennor congratulated Lt Col Daunivakasala Kalitabua Ravunakana, the Commanding Officer of Fiji Batt 4 for his outstanding leadership throughout his tour of duty. Maj Viliame Finemateaki was also congratulated for his exceptional leadership in lead-

ing the UNDOF mission back to Camp Faouar. The Force Commander concluded by commanding all medal recipients reminding them that the UNDOF medals should be worn with honor as it signifies discipline, courage and integrity. The parade concluded with a March Past to honour the presence of the Force Commander and Head of Mission. Lt Col Ravunakana, CO Fiji Batt 4, in his remarks said that the Fiji Batt 4 Medal Parade reflects the culmination of the diligent work and sacrifice put in by its servicemen and servicewomen during the past seven months. He noted the tremendous support and encouragement given by families and friends throughout their tour of duty and wished Fiji Batt 5 well in their pre-deployment preparations.



*Fiji Batt Officers saluting the Force Commander during march pass at CZ*



*Camp Faouar troops proudly march pass the Force Commander after the presentation of UNDOF medals*

# PERSONAL HYGIENE AND FOOD SAFETY IN INTERNATIONAL KITCHENS



MEDICAL

## INTRODUCTION

Food hygiene constitutes a basic necessity for the immaculate administration of a camp comprising of troops of diverse ethnicity. Good manufacturing practices, development of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), standard checks and balances, and being an informed consumer, all play a vital role in safe sanitation and food hygiene practices.

to note about these areas is that they function not as a static entity, but as a constantly evolving system. This is why good food hygiene practices need to be responsive to the dynamics of the international kitchen environment and emerging risks. Food hygiene should cover all of these elements throughout the supply chain.



It is needless to mention that an appreciable percentage of food borne illness cases can be attributed to poor sanitation and food hygiene, including poor personal hygiene and contamination of equipment and/or environments. The international codes of practices concerning food hygiene are very well laid with stipulated guidelines. While implementing a food hygiene and sanitation program, a total supply chain approach is crucial. The major areas to be covered and kept in mind are equipment, environment, air and water. A key thing

## BEST PRACTICE

Personal hygiene begins at home, with the essential elements for good hygiene being a clean body, clean hair and clean clothing. Hair in food can be a source of both microbiological and physical contamination. Hairnets and beard covers should be worn to assure food product integrity. Long-sleeved smocks should be worn to cover arm hair. Clean uniforms, aprons and other outer garments that are put on after the employee gets to work can help minimize contamination.



While working, clothing should be kept reasonably clean and in good repair. Removal of smocks, lab coats or aprons should take place when leaving the work area to go to the employee break room, restroom or exiting the building. Personal items such as meals and snacks should be stored in a locker or break room area that is located away from processing areas or areas where equipment and utensils are washed.



The only jewellery allowed in a food plant is a plain wedding band and/or one small post earring in each ear. No other jewellery is to be worn because it may fall into the product, it can present a safety hazard and it cannot be adequately sanitized against bacterial transmission.

It should be removed prior to entering the international kitchens. It is important that the best practices be communicated to the concerned staff in the language that all employees understand. Practices and procedures must be translated for all employees, no matter what language they speak. Proper hygiene practices should be communicated prior to tasking and reaffirmed with periodic refresher training programs.

Signs with pictures of good practices are an excellent method to reinforce best practices. These should be displayed in areas where applicable and be multilingual. Appropriate recognition of the outstanding worker is essential for his motivation and for others to emulate.



Article by Lt Col RS Yadav, FHO

## MONTORING AND EVALUATION

A comprehensive food hygiene and sanitation program leaves nothing to chance. Responsibility should be designated for each parameter. Cleaning and food hygiene procedures for the building, plant and equipment should be validated on regular basis using visual, analytical or microbiological methods – and records should be maintained.

For instance, at times swab samples can be taken from various places on equipment, floors, walls or drains, to test for the presence of contamination. Then, after applying a sanitation step, samples can be taken again and compared with the original results to ensure that the step is effective at reducing harmful microbes to safe levels. For certain high-risk materials (e.g. allergens, ruminant protein or ready-to-eat products), validation of procedures is mandated, with individual organisation designating acceptable methods for cleaning of high-risk materials.

## CONCLUSION

Good Hygiene Principles need to be regulated and enforced. It is imperative that international kitchen staff follow and understand basic food protection practices and maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and good sanitation practices to prevent food product contamination.

Unless employees understand and follow basic food protection principles, they may unintentionally contaminate food packaging, water and other workers, thereby creating the opportunity to transmit food borne illness. Using common sense and food science based approaches, a well-designed food hygiene program can provide for proactive responses and risk-mitigation from farm to fork.

# BODY MASS INDEX CONCEPT AND CLINICAL CORRELATION



MEDICAL

## What is BMI?

Body mass index (BMI) is a simple measure of weight adjusted for height and is defined as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters Weight (kg) / Height (m<sup>2</sup>). Although BMI is often considered an indicator of body fatness, it is a surrogate measure of body fat because it measures excess weight rather than excess body fat.

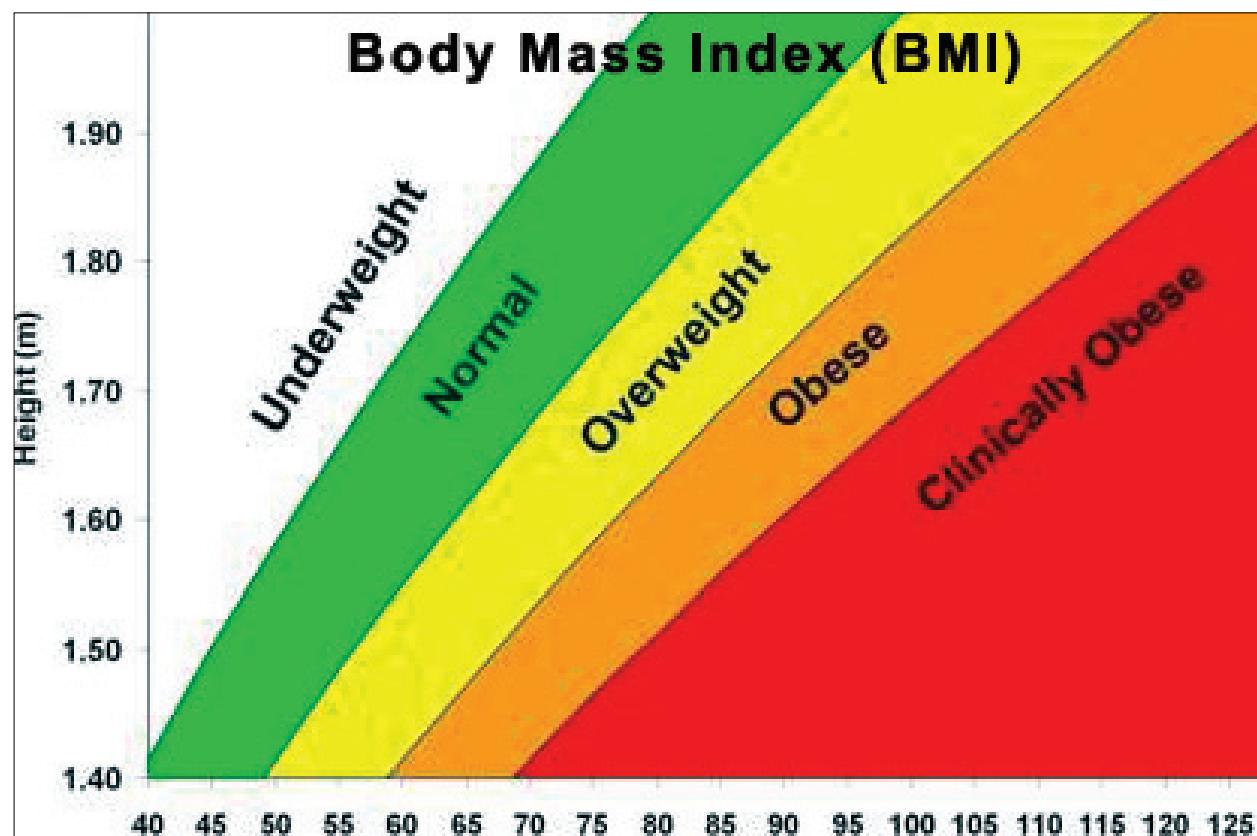
BMI	Weight Status
<b>Below 18.5</b>	<b>Underweight</b>
<b>18.5- 24.9</b>	<b>Normal</b>
<b>25.0- 29.9</b>	<b>Overweight</b>
<b>30.0 and Above</b>	<b>Obese</b>

## Why use BMI?

BMI is a simple, inexpensive, and non-invasive surrogate measure of body fat. In contrast to other methods, BMI relies solely on height and weight and with access to the proper equipment, individuals can have their BMI routinely measured and calculated with reasonable accuracy. Furthermore, studies have shown that BMI levels correlate with body fat and with future health risks. High BMI predicts future morbidity and death. Therefore, BMI is an appropriate measure for screening for obesity and its health risks. Lastly, the widespread and longstanding application of BMI contributes to its utility at the population

level. Its use has resulted in an increased availability of published population data that allows public health professionals to make comparisons across time, regions, and population subgroups. Studies have shown that BMI levels correlate with future health risks. Some of the common diseases associated with high BMI are:

1. Heart disease
2. Diabetes - type 2
3. Hypertension
4. Sleep apnea
5. Arthritis of Knees and Hips
6. Varicose veins





### What are its limitations?

BMI serves as the initial screening of overweight and obesity for adults 20 years and older. However, some of its clinical limitations need to be understood as well.

Factors such as age, sex, ethnicity, and muscle mass can influence the relationship between BMI and body fat.

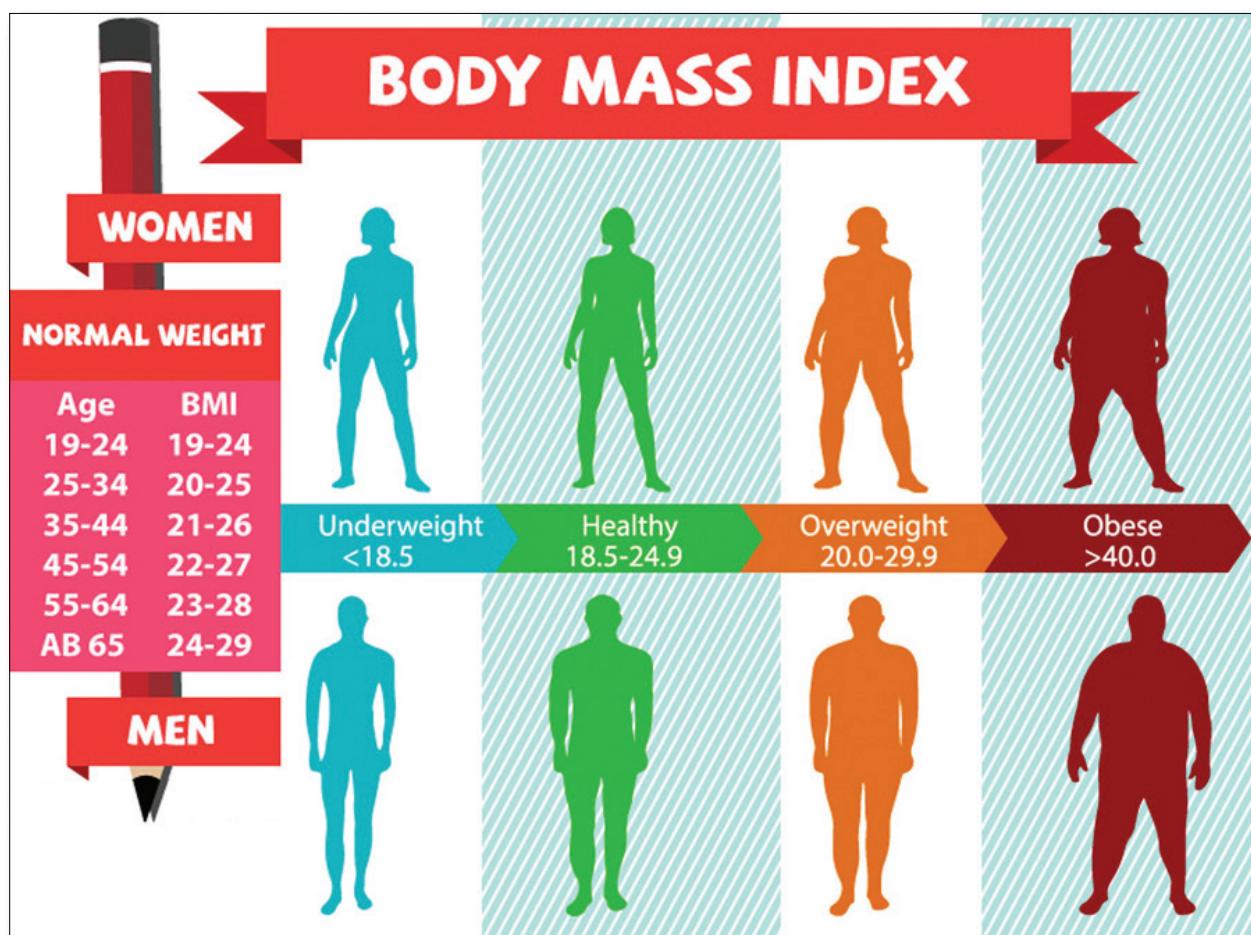
Also, BMI does not distinguish between excess fat, muscle, or bone mass, nor does it provide any indication of the distribution of fat among individuals. For example: a muscular individual, or a highly trained athlete, may have a high BMI because of increased muscle mass. Likewise, on average, women have greater amounts of total body fat than men with an equivalent BMI. Hence some

other means to measure body fat need to be understood; these include measurement of waist circumference, waist-to-hip ratio, skinfold thickness, underwater weighing, bioelectrical impedance and dual energy x-ray absorption.

### Conclusion

BMI is a reasonable indicator of body fat for both adults and children. Because BMI does not measure body fat directly, it should not be used as a diagnostic tool.

Instead, BMI should be used as a measure to track weight status in populations and as a screening tool to identify potential weight problems in individuals.



Article by Major Dr Raj Kumar Thapa, Consultant Physician, SMO, Level-1 Hospital, Nepcon V

References:

US Dept of Health & Human Services Centres for Disease Control and Prevention- Body Mass Index: Considerations for Practitioners

# Upcoming Regional Events

## 11 July 2017 - FAST OF THE SHIVA ASAR B'TAMMUZ IN ISRAEL

The Fast of Shiva Asar B'Tammuz is held on the 17th day of Tammuz, which is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. It observes five calamities that affected the Jewish people. These are: (1) Moses broke the tablets of stone and (2) an idol known as “the Golden Calf” was erected in 1313 BCE; (3) the daily sacrificial offerings were discontinued in 423 BCE; (4) Jerusalem’s walls were breached in 69 BCE; and (5) the Roman military leader Apostomus burned a Torah scroll possibly around 50 CE just before the Bar Kokhba revolt. This is not a public holiday in Israel however, many Jewish people fast from dawn until nightfall by abstaining from food and drinks. People who are ill or weak, children and pregnant or nursing mothers may not fast completely but only eat simple food. In addition, special prayers are recited and sections of the Torah and Haftarah (Haftorah, Haptara) are read during the morning and evening services. In contrast to some fast days, Jewish people may be permitted to wear leather and wash themselves on the 17th of Tammuz.



## 31 July 2017 - TISHA B'AY

Tisha B'Av is an annual fast day in Judaism which commemorates the anniversary of a number of disasters in Jewish history, primarily the destruction of both the First Temple by the Babylonians and the Second Temple by the Romans in Jerusalem. The observance of the day includes

five prohibitions, most notable of which is a 25-hour fast. The Book of Lamentations, which mourns the destruction of Jerusalem is read in the synagogue, followed by the recitation of kinnot, liturgical dirges that lament the loss of the Temples and Jerusalem. As the day has become associated with remembrance of other major calamities which have befallen the Jewish people, some kinnot also recall events such as the murder of the Ten Martyrs by the Romans, massacres in numerous medieval Jewish communities during the Crusades and The Holocaust.





## Upcoming Regional Events

### 15 August 2017 – Feast of the Assumption

The 15th August is a Public Holiday in Syria and Lebanon to commemorate the Assumption of the Virgin Mary into Heaven also known as the Falling Asleep of the Blessed Virgin Mary. According to the beliefs of the Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodoxy, Oriental Orthodoxy, and parts of Anglicanism, the assumption was the bodily taking up of the Virgin

Mary into Heaven at the end of her earthly life. In the churches that observe it, the Assumption is a major feast day, commonly celebrated on 15 August. In many countries, the feast is also marked as a Holy Day of Obligation in the Roman Catholic Church and as a festival (under various names) in the Anglican Communion.

### 01 September 2017 - EID AL-ADHA

Eid al-Adha (Festival of the Sacrifice), also called the Bakr'-Eid (Sacrifice Feast), is the second of two Muslim holidays celebrated worldwide each year and considered the holier of the two. It honors the willingness of Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son, as an act of submission to God's command, before God then intervened, through his angel Jibra'il (Gabriel) and informs him that his sacrifice has already been accepted. The meat from the sacrificed animal is preferred to be divided into three parts. The family retains one third of the share; another third is given to relatives, friends and neighbors; and the remaining third is given to the poor and needy. In the Islamic lunar calendar, Eid al-Adha falls on the 10th day of Dhu al-Hijjah and lasts for four days. Eid al-Adha begins with a Sunnah prayer of two rakats followed by a sermon (khutbah). Eid al-Adha celebrations start after the descent of the Hajjaj, the pilgrims performing the Hajj, from Mount Arafat, a hill east of Mecca.



Article by Major Bijay Bhandari, SO PR



# UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING

## WORKING FOR PEACE AND STABILITY WORLDWIDE

### COUNTRIES CONTRIBUTING TO PEACEKEEPING

OVER **124** COUNTRIES CONTRIBUTE  
OVER **122,000** TROOPS, POLICE AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL



MORE THAN **95%** OF UN PEACEKEEPERS WORK IN MISSIONS  
WITH A PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MANDATE

OVER **600** HUMAN RIGHTS STAFF DEPLOYED IN NINE OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS  
TO SUPPORT THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

### LARGEST MISSION

### DR Congo [MONUSCO]

**22,492** authorized strength

Troops: 16,938  
Military observers: 454  
Police: 1,226  
International civilians: 816  
Local civilians: 2,654  
UN Volunteers: 404

### SIX PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IMPLEMENT

### DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES TARGETING

**250,000** BENEFICIARIES

**250** STAFF IN **14** PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

WORK IN STRENGTHENING THE RULE OF LAW AND SECURITY INSTITUTIONS

### UN PEACEKEEPERS HELP PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

**7 Million**

TOTAL SQUARE KILOMETRES IN WHICH WE OPERATE

**125 Million**

TOTAL POPULATION OF AREAS IN WHICH WE OPERATE

### A GLOBAL LOGISTICS OPERATION

	<b>14,000</b>	VEHICLES
	<b>310</b>	MEDICAL CLINICS
	<b>158</b>	HELICOPTERS
	<b>54</b>	AIRPLANES
	<b>26</b>	UUAVs unarmed, unmanned aerial vehicles
	<b>7</b>	SHIPS

### PEACEKEEPING INCLUDES

**16** MISSIONS ACROSS **4** CONTINENTS AND **11** TIME ZONES



FOR THE MOST RECENT INFORMATION VISIT

Data used from 2016–2017 \*Approved resources for the period from 31 July 2016 to 30 June 2017

[www.un.org/peacekeeping](http://www.un.org/peacekeeping)



