

BLUE BERET

Officer exchange programme boosts sector cooperation

Between 16 and 20 January, UNFICYP held its regular Junior Officer Exchange programme across the mission's sectors. The programme involves sending two junior officers to two other sectors with the aim of familiarizing them with their areas of responsibility, allowing them to exchange experiences and promoting inter-sector relationships.

Argentinian-led Sector 1 hosted two officers, 1st Lt Balázs Peti from Sector 4 and Lt Sebastian Moulding from Sector 2. The terrain of Sector 1, with its steep hills, dangerous narrow patrol tracks and vast forests, is markedly different from the other sectors, providing a good opportunity for the two officers to walk in the shoes of colleagues from Sector 1. Sector 1 also prepared a few operational briefings featuring the most significant issues in their areas of responsibility. Sector 2 hosted Capt Aleksander Ilic from Sector 4 and 1st Lt Mauricio Guerrero from Sector 1. After a quick walkthrough and introduction to their new home,

the historical Ledra Palace Hotel that serves as sector 2's HQ, Ilic and Guerrero were taken through a familiarisation exercise of the area of responsibility patrolled by Sector 2.

Although their working practices differed slightly, it was clear that they shared much in common in the way all Sectors carried out the task of patrolling their respective areas of the Buffer Zone.

The highlight of the week was a Green Line Tour conducted by WO2 Murray. The abandoned streets presented ample opportunities for photos and discussion. Both officers were given an insight into the planning and coordination that takes place across all departments in Sector 2 through the Commander's Update Brief and Joint Commanders Brief in the mornings. The afternoon involved a helicopter overflight of Sector 2, allowing Ilic and Guerrero to appreciate from the air, the ground they had been viewing the previous two days.



1st Lt Mario Calderon from Sector 1 and 1st Lt Liam Heller from Sector 2 were deployed in Sector 4 under the responsibility of Capt. Gábor Kovács (2iC COY). The officers spent their time familiarising themselves with Sector 4's area of operation, the sector's tasks and understanding the differences between their sectors and Sector 4. Calderon and Heller also received operational briefings from key officials of the sector.

Throughout the week, the officers had plenty of opportunity to socialise with their colleagues from other countries, learning more about each nation's history, culture, habits and of course cuisine. The Junior Exchange Officers programme proved once again to be a useful tool for establishing excellent cooperation between the multinational sectors, and for officers to broaden their range of knowledge and skills.



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