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## **Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus**

### **I. Introduction**

1. The present report on the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) covers developments from 19 December 2015 to 24 June 2016 and brings up to date, since the issuance of my report dated 6 January 2016 (S/2016/11), the record of activities carried out by UNFICYP pursuant to Security Council resolution 186 (1964) and subsequent Council resolutions, most recently resolution 2263 (2016).

2. As at 15 June 2016, the strength of the military component stood at 861 for all ranks and the strength of the police component stood at 68 (see annex).

### **II. Significant political developments**

3. The Greek Cypriot leader, Nicos Anastasiades, and the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mustafa Akıncı, have continued to engage in settlement talks with dedication and perseverance. As I reported previously (S/2016/15), and following an agreement in the latter half of 2015 to increase the pace of the negotiations, the leaders continued to meet regularly during the reporting period, on average twice a month, while their respective negotiators and their teams met more frequently, often three times per week. The sides have also continued to work steadily at the level of experts, both in various working Groups and technical committees.

4. In a joint statement made on 15 May 2016 to mark one year of their negotiations, the leaders reiterated their determination to show the necessary will and courage to overcome the remaining outstanding issues. They also underlined their commitment to intensify their efforts in the coming months with the aim of reaching a comprehensive settlement agreement within 2016. More details are to be found in my report on the status of negotiations in the Cyprus settlement talks.

### **III. Activities of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus**

5. UNFICYP is intended first and foremost to prevent a recurrence of fighting and to contribute to the maintenance of law and order and a return to normal



conditions. Its mandate requires reconciling security considerations and the maintenance of the military status quo with allowing Cypriots who live and work in the buffer zone to pursue civilian activities and enjoy full and productive lives. Such an approach, when successful, builds confidence between communities and contributes to the overall effort by the United Nations in support of the peace process.

6. Further to discussions in October 2015 between my Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, and both leaders and between my Special Adviser, Espen Barth Eide, and my Special Representative, Lisa Buitenhuis, and the leaders and negotiators, UNFICYP has, in close collaboration with my mission of good offices, continued its planning in preparation for any post-settlement role assigned to the United Nations in support of the peace process. Both sides have consistently expressed that they are in favour of a timely settlement. The challenges anticipated in the early days of a settlement, including any possible support from the United Nations, are yet to be discussed in depth.

#### **A. Prevention of a recurrence of fighting and maintenance of the military status quo**

7. The integrity and stability of the buffer zone was maintained throughout the reporting period. Regular UNFICYP patrols, detailed observation, sustained liaison at all levels and clear efforts to strengthen relationships with the opposing forces allowed the Force to avoid any significant escalation of disputes. Indeed, there has been an overall decrease in instances of ill-discipline on both sides.

8. At the same time, challenges to the authority of UNFICYP in the buffer zone continued. These are rooted in the non-recognition by both opposing forces of the 1989 aide-memoire and, in particular, in a lack of agreement on the exact delineation of ceasefire lines. Ongoing refurbishment and reconstruction of military positions contrary to the aide-memoire by both sides continued to cause concern, in particular when they were perceived as conferring a military advantage or were not accompanied by the deconstruction of old positions. Any delay or failure to deconstruct old positions, for example in the Kokkina pocket and in the centre of Nicosia along the Green Line, has the potential to encourage reciprocal activity, with a corresponding increase in tension.

9. The installation and prevalence of closed-circuit television equipment at positions that remain manned is a concern. The view of UNFICYP remains that closed-circuit television equipment installed at a position confers a military advantage unless it is unmanned. In addition, military positions established by both forces inside the buffer zone that violate the status quo, in particular at Strovilia, remain in place and are classified as permanent violations. The United Nations continues to hold the Government of Turkey responsible for the status quo in Varosha.

#### **B. Demining activity**

10. Following up on demining work carried out in the previous reporting period, UNFICYP planned for the clearance of the five dangerous areas in the north

identified during the survey of the 28 minefield locations released by Mr. Anastasiades to Mr. Akinci in May 2015 as part of leader-to-leader confidence-building measures. With funding included in the UNFIYCP 2016/17 budget, technical expertise from the United Nations Mine Action Service will be embedded in the mission and the clearance work contracted to a civilian demining organization.

11. With respect to the minefield just north of the buffer zone in Mammari, which caused the mine-wash in 2015 as a result of heavy rains, no progress was registered on the clearance of the minefield despite assurances by the Turkish Cypriot security forces. Nor has progress been made in clearing the four known remaining minefields in the buffer zone, of which three belong to the National Guard and one to the Turkish forces. While the Turkish Cypriot side has indicated that it would accept the clearance of all four areas as a package, the Greek Cypriot side maintains the position that its three minefields are required to counter a perceived threat. Efforts continue at all levels to advance a more comprehensive approach to demining, both inside and outside the buffer zone.

### **C. Restoration of normal conditions and humanitarian functions**

12. UNFICYP police maintained daily communication with police forces to enhance liaison and cooperation in addressing operational matters within and beyond the buffer zone. In parallel to such daily liaison, UNFICYP continued to facilitate the work of the Technical Committee on Crime and Criminal Matters and the Joint Communications Room. The latter facilitated the exchange of more than 100 requests for information during the reporting period with a view to solving crimes with intercommunal elements.

13. UNFICYP continued to face challenges to its authority throughout the reporting period, which saw 491 reported unauthorized incursions into the buffer zone, including 54 by Greek Cypriot hunters, who were often armed, and 99 by farmers. In anticipation of the hunting season, UNFICYP police intensified its liaison with local authorities and intelligence-led patrolling, including joint patrols with UNFICYP military and game wardens.

14. The Dhenia mosque inside the buffer zone in sector 1 suffered extensive damage when its roof burned as a result of an arson attack on 21 February 2016. Both leaders immediately condemned the attack in separate statements. The mosque had previously been vandalized, in January 2013, and had just been restored through the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage programme in December 2014 with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funding from the European Union. No arrests were made. With respect to the events of 18 November 2015, during which two vehicles belonging to Turkish Cypriots were targeted by Greek Cypriot youths throwing stones, some 25 students were charged with various offences in relation to the incidents during the reporting period. UNFICYP will continue to follow the judicial proceedings.

15. Pursuant to its mandate to contribute to a return to normal conditions, UNFICYP continued to engage with the respective authorities, local community representatives and civilians, including through regular outreach meetings, to facilitate civilian activities in the buffer zone in accordance with established procedures. UNFICYP allowed farming, grazing and construction activities,

provided those activities did not compromise safety and security in the area. To that end, the mission issued more than 621 permits and approved all 15 applications for civilian construction in the buffer zone. UNFICYP also cooperated with the authorities to reduce unlawful activities such as dumping and tree-cutting in the buffer zone, in consultation, as appropriate, with relevant environmental services. The university in Pyla continues to operate without UNFICYP authorization.

16. From January to 31 May, 951,081 official crossings of the buffer zone were recorded. UNFICYP continues to play an important role with regard to all interactions at, around or through crossing points. In particular, UNFICYP police continued to provide escorts for convoys of civilians and supplies at the Limnitis/Yeşilirmak crossing point, in accordance with the agreement reached by the leaders in October 2010.

17. Beyond the buffer zone, UNFICYP continued to provide humanitarian support for 332 Greek Cypriots and 103 Maronites residing in the north, including through weekly deliveries of humanitarian assistance. UNFICYP facilitated the post-mortem transfer of six Greek Cypriots for burial in the north. The Force also continued to provide logistical support to and visit the Greek Cypriot primary and secondary schools on the Karpas Peninsula. Of 124 textbooks for the Rizokarpaso elementary and secondary schools, 6 were rejected by the Turkish Cypriot authorities. While a Greek Cypriot nurse provided services at a local clinic in the Karpas Peninsula, the request for a Greek-speaking doctor to attend to the health needs of elderly Greek Cypriots remained outstanding. The mission continued to engage with local authorities to ensure access to health-care, welfare and educational services for Turkish Cypriots residing in the south. There were no developments regarding the establishment of a Turkish language school in Limassol, although Turkish-speaking pupils in the area continued to have access to Turkish language classes at a high school and primary school.

18. UNFICYP assisted in addressing the legal and humanitarian issues faced by three Greek Cypriots detained in the north and one Turkish Cypriot in the south through visits to the facilities where they were held. To enhance confidence in the judicial proceedings, UNFICYP attended two court hearings in the south.

19. UNFICYP continued to facilitate contacts between the Nicosia municipal offices to promote cooperation, including through 12 joint meetings to develop projects to address environmental, social and health issues affecting both sides. UNFICYP also provided support to representatives of the Nicosia Master Plan, a bicommunal mechanism established in 1979 to address urban issues in old town Nicosia, in their efforts to restore and protect Nicosia's multicultural heritage and to build a vibrant and prosperous future for the historic old town, although there was no tangible progress on proposed infrastructure projects during the reporting period.

20. With a view to fostering bicommunal cooperation and reconciliation, UNFICYP supported 66 sporting, cultural, educational and other civil society events as well as preparatory meetings in cooperation with local civil society and, in some cases, international partners, in which more than 5,285 individuals participated. On 14 May, more than 200 Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot children and young people participated in a bicommunal festival that was held inside the buffer zone as the culmination of two previous "culture of peace" educational training activities.

21. In addition, the Ledra Palace Hotel was host to some 93 bicomunal gatherings with more than 2,874 participants, including six meetings of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political party representatives under the auspices of the Embassy of Slovakia.

22. The Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce continued to promote confidence between the two communities; a second round of their bicomunal internship programme will begin in September 2016. In 2015, 12 Greek Cypriots and 12 Turkish Cypriots were placed with companies based in the other community.

23. Religious and commemorative events, in the north for Greek Cypriots and in the south for Turkish Cypriots, permit Cypriots to continue traditional religious practices and, in some cases, provide important opportunities for interaction between members of the communities. UNFICYP facilitated the participation of more than 15,000 persons at some 50 religious services and commemorative events, which were either conducted in the buffer zone or required crossing the buffer zone, including at two newly accessible sites for worship in the north, namely, the Maronite Church of St. Anne in Famagusta and the Cypriot Church of St. John the Baptist in Argaki. In addition to the religious services described above, on 23 December 2015, UNFICYP facilitated the crossing of nearly 1,000 pilgrims from the north to the Hala Sultan Tekke mosque in Larnaca.

24. In May, the Turkish Cypriot authorities proposed policy changes that, if implemented, would lead to a reduction in approvals for religious services in the north of the island. In an effort to ensure continued access to religious sites, my Special Adviser and Special Representative intervened in support of access to all religious sites and a continued increase in the number of religious services conducted by Greek Cypriots in the north. UNFICYP will continue to monitor this issue closely and to advocate for freedom of worship for people of all faiths across the island.

25. The religious leaders of Cyprus continued their dialogue and joint efforts. On 10 February, they reiterated their full support to the negotiations for a settlement of the Cyprus problem through a statement to the press calling for the further easing of restrictions on freedom of religion, including improved access to destroyed or neglected places of worship and cemeteries in need of repair. In March, the religious leaders delivered the first jointly signed letter to the leaders, outlining their expectations in a settlement, with regard to the administration of properties belonging to religious institutions.

26. Following the sustained engagement on Cyprus issues by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, the religious leaders made their second joint presentation, at the Human Rights Council meeting in Geneva in March 2016; and at a parallel meeting, hosted by the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in Geneva, they jointly highlighted their cooperative efforts for the realization of religious freedom or belief across the island. Issues relating to freedom of worship were also raised by the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, who visited sites of cultural importance in Cyprus between 24 May and 2 June and held meetings with a wide range of interlocutors.

27. During the reporting period, as part of its contribution to confidence-building measures and their implementation, UNFICYP continued to facilitate the work of

eight technical committees (on broadcasting, cultural heritage, crime and criminal matters, crisis management, crossings, environment, health and humanitarian affairs). Of particular note, the Technical Committee on Crime and Criminal Matters held a seminar on federal policing on 17 February. Both communities have been disappointed by delays in progress on the opening of the two new crossings at Lefka-Aplici/Lefke-Apliç and Deryneia/Derynia.

28. UNFICYP, my mission of good offices and UNDP also worked closely with the Technical Committee on Gender Equality. As part of an ongoing series of gender-related panel discussions, the Technical Committee hosted a panel discussion on how women make peacebuilding better on 10 March to mark International Women's Day, with the facilitation of UNFICYP and my mission of good offices. The Technical Committee also met with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia during her visit to Cyprus on 5 and 6 May. The Regional Director encouraged active participation by women in politics, peacebuilding and governance and voiced her support for bicomunal cooperation on the preparation of an action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

29. UNDP, with strong support from the European Union, continued working closely with the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage and the Technical Committee on Crossings. During the reporting period, work on three cultural heritage sites in the walled city of Famagusta progressed, while other large projects, such as Agios Panteleimonas and Apostolos Andreas, are expected to be completed by the end of 2016. UNDP also facilitated guided tours to ongoing heritage conservation projects, while the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage raised awareness of ongoing works through presentations and media appearances. On 15 and 16 April, more than 200 people from both communities participated in an event to mark the International Day for Monuments and Sites.

30. Progress on the implementation of confidence-building measures agreed to and announced by the leaders in 2015 has been mixed. The lifting of a requirement to fill in administrative forms at crossing points was immediately implemented and considerable progress in demining was made in 2015. While initial work was carried out around agreed new crossing points and on the interconnectivity of electricity grids, no progress has been made on the interoperability of mobile telephones to date.

#### **IV. Conduct and discipline and sexual exploitation and abuse**

31. Between 20 December 2015 and 17 June 2016, two category 1 allegations were reported and referred for investigation. Neither of the allegations are related to sexual exploitation and abuse; during the reporting period, there were no reports of category 2 allegations. It is notable that the total number of allegations in 2015-2016 is lower than in 2013-2014, when 14 allegations were reported, of which 4 were category 1 (including 2 unsubstantiated allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse) and 10 were category 2.

32. The UNFICYP Conduct and Discipline and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Working Group continued to monitor, on a quarterly basis, compliance with the sexual exploitation and abuse plan of action adopted by the mission, which was

designed to implement specific actions to prevent acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by mission personnel, and to strengthen reporting mechanisms and assistance provided to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. On 4 February 2016, UNFICYP established a Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Standing Task Force to serve as the expert body in the mission providing guidance on operational and strategic sexual exploitation and abuse matters.

33. Training is at the core of the activities carried out by UNFICYP to raise awareness of the United Nations standards of conduct and to emphasize the Secretary-General's policy of zero tolerance, zero complacency and zero impunity for acts of sexual exploitation and abuse. During the reporting period, a total of 13 training sessions relating to conduct and discipline and sexual exploitation and abuse were conducted, in which 619 military personnel and 38 United Nations police personnel participated.

## **V. Committee on Missing Persons**

34. On 20 December 2015, the leaders visited the laboratory of the Committee on Missing Persons and recorded an appeal calling on all Cypriots to provide information to the Committee on possible burial sites. The appeal was shown island-wide on television during the first weeks of 2016. As at 15 June, out of a total of 2,001 persons on the official list of missing persons, the bicomunal teams of archaeologists of the Committee had exhumed the remains of 1,112 missing persons on both sides of the island. To date, the remains of 643 individuals have been identified and returned to their respective families, including those of 18 individuals during the reporting period. Since the beginning of 2016, the Committee has started to accelerate its excavations in military areas in the north. In line with the permission received in November 2015, the Committee has thus far excavated 4 of the 10 military sites planned for 2016. On several occasions during the reporting period, the Committee relied on advice from UNFICYP experts on how to mitigate risks posed by unexploded ordinance encountered during excavations.

## **VI. Financial and administrative aspects**

35. The General Assembly, by its resolution 70/273, appropriated the amount of \$54.8 million for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, inclusive of the voluntary contribution of one third of the net cost of the Force, equivalent to \$18.4 million, from the Government of Cyprus and the voluntary contribution of \$6.5 million from the Government of Greece. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNFICYP beyond 31 July 2016, the cost of maintaining the Force would be limited to the amounts approved by the General Assembly.

36. As at 22 June 2016, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNFICYP amounted to \$16.4 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at that date amounted to \$2,202.5 million.

37. Reimbursement of troop costs has been made for the period up to 30 April 2016, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has been made for the period up to 31 March 2016, in accordance with the quarterly schedule.

## VII. Observations

38. The leaders demonstrated courage and perseverance during the reporting period and made genuine progress through their constant engagement. I urge them to redouble their efforts in the months to come if they are to meet their stated aim of reaching a comprehensive settlement within 2016.

39. At the same time, I am concerned about the lack of progress in the implementation of some confidence-building measures, which were previously agreed upon and announced by the leaders as a sign of their mutual commitment on 28 May 2015. Mobile phone interoperability, interconnectivity of electricity grids and the opening of the two crossings at Lefka-Aplici/Lefke-Apıç and Deryneia/Derinya, despite initial progress, have not materialized. I urge the leaders to implement all agreed measures in good faith and without delay. Such measures can be instrumental in building a conducive environment for the negotiations as they can have a positive and concrete impact on the everyday lives of Cypriots and indicate that an alternative future is possible and within reach.

40. In line with the leaders' joint affirmation in November 2015 against racism and hatred, in which they condemned the assault of two Turkish Cypriots by Greek Cypriot youths throwing stones and stated that such acts would not go unpunished, I welcome the reports that legal proceedings are under way. A swift conclusion of the case will send the right signal that such acts will not be tolerated now or in a future united Cyprus.

41. Demining remains an important measure to build confidence. As I stated in my previous report, I remain concerned at the delays in the clearance of the minefield adjacent to the ceasefire line near Mammari and urge that the clearance be carried out as swiftly as possible to avoid another mine-wash incident in the area. With the acceleration of the talks, it is all the more important that the two sides engage and take concrete steps without further delay towards island-wide demining. Early clearance would also allow greater freedom of movement in the event of a settlement and around and across the current buffer zone. Minefields on the island have little military value and serve only to pose a risk to life. The case for clearing all minefields on the island could not be more compelling. I urge everyone to work towards a mine-free Cyprus.

42. As in previous reports, I continue to call upon both community leaders to exert efforts to create a climate conducive to achieving greater economic and social parity between the two sides and to widen and deepen economic, social, cultural, sporting or similar ties and contacts, including with a view to encouraging trade. Such contacts promote trust between the communities and help to address the Turkish Cypriots' concerns regarding isolation. I urge both leaders to persist in addressing those issues.

43. I commend the ongoing dialogue among the leaders of the religious communities, whose joint efforts foster greater understanding and reduce mistrust. I urge both sides to support that dialogue by ensuring that the trend continues towards full access for worship to the more than 500 churches and other places of worship in the north and the some 100 mosques in the south. Similarly, I encourage the sides to fully engage civil society in the ongoing process, with a view to fostering grass-roots support for a solution. In particular, I urge all actors to increase the participation of women at all levels and to incorporate a gender perspective in their



efforts to reach a sustainable peace in Cyprus pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

44. The United Nations remains committed to supporting the vital humanitarian work being carried out on behalf of the families of victims through the Committee on Missing Persons. In the light of the advanced age of both relatives and witnesses, it is critical that the Committee be given the means and the information required to accelerate its work.

45. The role of UNFICYP in maintaining a conducive environment in which the negotiations can take place remains of paramount importance for the overall success of the process. This role includes pre-empting and responding in a timely and efficient manner to civilian, law and order and military-related issues that arise on a daily basis in and around the buffer zone and encouraging bicomunal activities to rebuild trust and cooperation. I call upon both sides to support these two aspects of the UNFICYP mandate, namely, to act decisively towards all who engage in activities not authorized by the Force, thus showing respect for its authority in the buffer zone, and secondly, to support the mission's efforts to bring both communities together to address issues of mutual concern.

46. Once again, I urge the sides to formally accept the aide-memoire of 1989, without which there will be repeated contestation of the United Nations delineation of the ceasefire lines. The ability of UNFICYP to play its role in maintaining a stable environment depends by and large on the commitment of the two sides to refrain from challenging the authority, legitimacy and impartiality of the Force in the buffer zone.

47. While acknowledging that closed-circuit television cameras can help to monitor illegal activity in the buffer zone and thus contribute to improved security in the area, such installations confer a military advantage and constitute a violation of the status quo if unaccompanied by a reduction in military personnel. I therefore strongly encourage steps towards a permanent reduction in the military presence and posture along the ceasefire line, starting in those positions that have been enhanced with closed-circuit television cameras, and particularly in the militarized area within the Venetian walls of old town Nicosia.

48. As noted earlier and in the light of positive developments on the ground and the request of the Security Council in its resolution 2263 (2016), UNFICYP, in coordination with my mission of good offices, has continued transition-planning in relation to a settlement. This process has highlighted a number of issues that will require timely consideration by the parties and the Security Council in terms of the support that may be required in a post-settlement phase. Indeed, among other issues, the limited ability of UNFICYP to deliver appropriate support to a settlement at the current Force levels and configuration, and the lead time for force and police generation, need to be duly taken into account. Mindful of the foregoing, I urge both sides to engage more fully and, as future partners, with each other, as well as with UNFICYP and my good offices mission, on issues relating to the implementation of a settlement. Equally important will be the strong support of the international community. This planning will continue to be guided by developments in the negotiations and the views of the sides.

49. I recommend that the mandate of the mission be extended for a period of six months, until 31 January 2017. I express my gratitude to the 34 countries that have

now contributed either military or police personnel or both to the mission since 1964. I pay tribute to the 186 peacekeepers who lost their lives during that period in support of peace in Cyprus. It is incumbent upon all parties to work in a determined manner towards a comprehensive settlement, to which all Cypriots aspire and which would obviate the continuing need for a peacekeeping presence.

50. I would like to express my appreciation to Lisa Bутtenheim, who concluded her assignment with UNFICYP on 10 June, for her dedicated service over almost six years as my Special Representative in Cyprus and Head of Mission. As Deputy Special Adviser, Ms. Bутtenheim directly supported the talks in addition to leading the Force's support to my mission of good offices.

51. I would like to thank the UNFICYP Force Commander, Major General Kristin Lund, for her service. Major General Lund will leave UNFICYP at the end of July, after two years of outstanding service, as the first female force commander in the United Nations, a milestone in peacekeeping history.

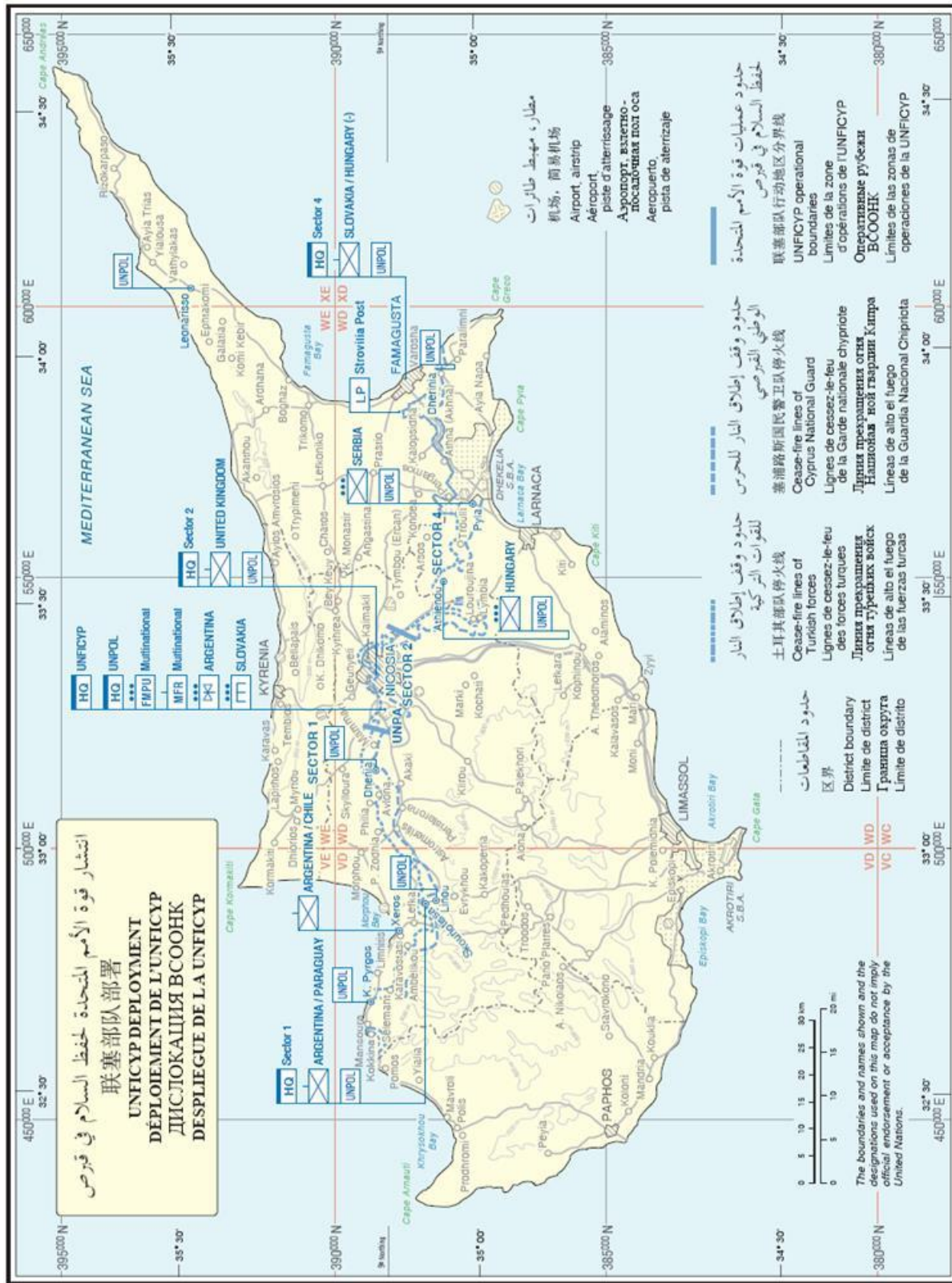
52. I would also like to welcome Elizabeth Spehar, who arrived on the island in June to take up her position as my Special Representative and Head of UNFICYP. Lastly, I extend my thanks to all the men and women serving in UNFICYP for the efficiency and commitment with which they have discharged the responsibilities entrusted to them by the Security Council. I also express my appreciation to my Special Adviser, Espen Barth Eide, for his efforts to facilitate the talks between the sides.

## Annex

### Countries providing military and police personnel to the United Nations operation in Cyprus (as at 15 June 2016)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Military personnel</i>
Argentina	265
Austria	4
Brazil	2
Canada	1
Chile	14
Hungary	77
Norway	2
Paraguay	14
Serbia	46
Slovakia	159
Ukraine	2
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	275
<b>Total</b>	<b>861</b>

<i>Country</i>	<i>Police personnel</i>
Australia	9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	9
China	6
India	5
Ireland	12
Lithuania	2
Montenegro	4
Romania	5
Russian Federation	3
Serbia	2
Slovakia	5
Ukraine	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>



Map No. 2020 Rev. 09 UNITED NATIONS  
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 Department of Field Support  
 Geospatial Information Section (formerly Cartographic Section)