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Women Working for Peace

A female UNIFIL peacekeeper is shown from the chest up, wearing a blue helmet and a camouflage uniform. She is looking forward and slightly to the right, with her right hand near her helmet. The background is a light-colored, possibly white, surface, likely the side of a vehicle. There are some mechanical details and a blue object visible in the lower right corner.

Women in UNIFIL

The 23rd edition of *"Al-Janoub"* is dedicated to the service and sacrifice of the women - both military and civilian - who have served or continue to serve with UNIFIL for the cause of peace in south Lebanon.

As at 31 January 2019, 534 women peacekeepers serve with UNIFIL, accounting for 5.17 per cent of the Mission's total military peacekeeping strength. In August 2018, the UN Security Council requested the Secretary-General and troop-contributing countries to seek to increase the number of women in UNIFIL, as well as to ensure the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of operations.

In addition, the Council requested UNIFIL to take fully into account gender considerations as a cross-cutting issue and to assist the Lebanese authorities in ensuring the full and effective participation, involvement and representation of women at all levels of decision-making.

Subsequently, UNIFIL has stepped up joint activities involving female members of the Lebanese Army.



Message from the Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major General Stefano Del Col

“Women Working for Peace” is the central theme of the first edition of *“Al-Janoub”* in 2019.

By highlighting best practices in UNIFIL, this issue sets out to showcase and honour the great efforts and commitment of troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretary-General in mainstreaming gender to strengthen all aspects of peacekeeping operations.

It also pays tribute to the truly amazing efforts of Lebanon and the local communities in south Lebanon in drawing from the strength of women and girls, who have long been the trailblazers in creating positive change for their communities and families.

You will hear first-hand from some of them on how they see their roles in maintaining the stability that has lasted in south Lebanon for more than 12 years, while helping to further peace and economic opportunities.

Growing the number of women within our ranks is one of my top priorities, and one mandated by the UN Security Council. In renewing UNIFIL’s mandate for another year in August 2018, the 15-member Council requested the Secretary-General and troop-contributing countries to deploy more women to UNIFIL, and for the Mission to ensure their meaningful participation in all aspects of our operations. I have made this a priority, not only because it’s the right thing to do but because it is the smart thing to do.

Women – both in uniform and civilians – are playing an increasingly crucial role in UN peacekeeping operations and in building bridges that can lead to lasting peace. From conducting patrols, providing technical training,

serving as naval officers, gunners, pilots, doctors, legal advisors, nurses, senior managers and interacting with the communities, UN women peacekeepers not only serve in furthering peace, but much like their Lebanese counterparts, they serve as great role models.

As you will see in this issue, we are not alone. The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), our strategic partner, are taking the same steps and with strong results. In the same vein, many of our 43 troop-contributing countries are deploying to UNIFIL more women in uniform than ever before.

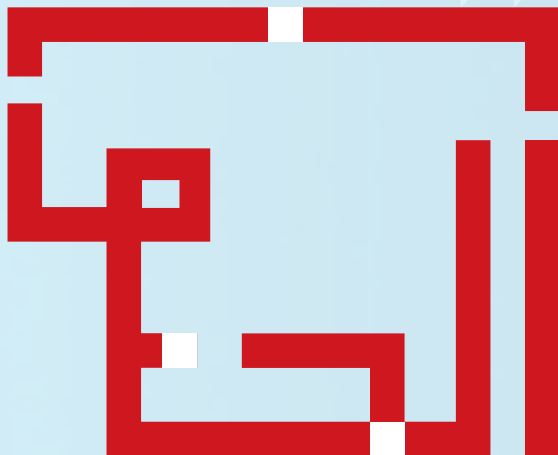
On the civilian side, among more than 800 personnel 29 per cent are women working alongside their military colleagues. Guided by the UN leadership, the Security Council and relevant UN resolutions, we are proactively seeking to increase the numbers of women in both military and civilian spheres.

Overall, having more women working for peace serves our Mandate well, including the much-needed collective push for a permanent ceasefire, as envisioned in UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

This year we will continue to work with the parties towards that, and to show south Lebanon as a living testament of stability in a region often beset by cycles of conflict.

I thank the editorial staff for their work on this edition and I look forward to continuing to engage with you all in the coming months.

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'Al-Janoub' is published by **UNIFIL**
Office of Strategic Communications
and Public Information

Publisher

Imran Riza

Editors-in-Chief

Malene Kamp Jensen
Andrea Tenenti

Senior Editor (English)

Tilak Pokharel

Editor (Arabic)

Joumana Sayegh

Production/Design

Zeina Ezzeddine

Editorial Assistant

Adib Al Moussa

Photographers

Hiba Monzer
Lebanese Army archive
MCOU

Mohamad Hamze

Nepalese Battalion

Pasqual Gorriz Marcos

Suzane Badereddine

UNIFIL Sector East PIO

UNIFIL Sector West PIO

UN archive

Infographic

Zeina Ezzeddine

Photo Editor

Zeina Ezzeddine

Contributors

Aoibheann O'Sullivan

Dany Ghafary

Hiba Monzer

Lt. Col. Rafael G. Escalante

Ronith Daher

Tilak Pokharel

"Al-Janoub" contact

Tel. +961 1 926 441

+961 1 926 442

Email pokharelt@un.org

Fax +961 1 827 016

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Kazakh peacekeepers join UNIFIL



The Republic of Kazakhstan joined UNIFIL on 31 October with the arrival of 120 Kazakh peacekeepers to serve with the UN mission in furthering peace in south Lebanon. This is the first time Kazakh troops are serving with UNIFIL in the Mission's more than 40-year history.

Commanded by Major Ayan

Nurkassov, the newly arrived peacekeepers joined the existing Indian Battalion in Ibl al-Saqi, south-eastern Lebanon.

While welcoming the troops to his base, Commanding Officer of the Indian Battalion, Colonel Jeevan B, called it a "historic moment." He added: "This has provided a great opportunity to both the

Indian and Kazakh troops to join hands for performing the noble task of peacekeeping in Lebanon."

Major Nurkassov said, "This is indeed a great opportunity for the Kazakhstan peacekeepers to contribute towards peace and stability in south Lebanon."

Kazakh flag was raised at special

ceremonies on 13 November.

The Kazakh troops serving with UNIFIL as one unit together with the fellow Indian peacekeepers is an example of south-south cooperation, which has been one of the underlying aims of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative launched by Secretary-General António Guterres in 2018.

Fijian troops conclude UNIFIL mission



With the departure of the last batch of 134 Fijian peacekeepers from their main base near At Tiri, south Lebanon, on 22 December 2018, one of UNIFIL's oldest troop contributors, the Republic of Fiji, has concluded its mission with the UN Mission.

In his farewell speech to the Fijians on 20 December, UNIFIL Head of

Mission and Force Commander Major General Stefano Del Col paid tribute to their service and sacrifice in furthering peace in south Lebanon.

"You provided an important contribution to the implementation of our mandate... I would like to praise you for your outstanding work, determination and for your contribution through the years," said the UNIFIL head.

Fijian troops joined UNIFIL soon after its establishment in 1978. The Fijian contingent first pulled out from the Mission in November 2002 although some staff officers continued to serve until April 2003. The new Fijian Contingent again joined the mission in February 2015.

Since 1978, a total of 35 Fijian peacekeepers have paid the ultimate price while serving for peace in south Lebanon.

3,600 community projects implemented since 2006



Started since 2006, UNIFIL has implemented about 3,600 civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) projects in south Lebanese towns and villages, addressing some of the most pressing needs of the host population and supporting local authorities, while strengthening the links between UNIFIL and local communities.

From fixing a road to providing medical, dental or veterinary assistance to educational

courses or capacity-building, these projects are leaving their imprint on the lives of people in southern Lebanon.

Till the end of December 2018, some 3,598 such projects have been implemented at the cost of about \$47 million. A large portion of the funding came from some of UNIFIL's key troop-contributing countries (TCCs), including Italy, Spain and the Republic of Korea.



Side by side... serving Lebanon

By Ronith Daher*

Their features are characterized by a femininity mixed with challenge and pride... On their foreheads the motto *“Honour, Sacrifice and Loyalty”* has been stamped - a slogan no longer exclusive to the military men, because women have become partners in implementing, defending and sacrificing for the saying.

In the doctrine of the Lebanese Army, the homeland is a priority, and the leopard-spotted uniform is the identity. Accordingly, these women have worn the battlefield attire, sworn in, and joined their colleagues to be active partners in the service of the nation.

The Lebanese Army is taking rapid steps towards modernity and development. In addition to its strategic plans to develop its military and human capabilities, the Army's Command decision to raise the number of females further supports this trend. The military institution has recently witnessed an overwhelming turnout of women to join the Army, most of whom are university graduates. They see the Army as an opportunity to prove themselves and a field in which they practice their knowledge, contributing to a qualitative leap within the institution and the male soldiers would be dispatched for fieldwork.

According to the records maintained by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), the first recruitment contract for a woman dates back to 1 September 1990. She was recruited in the Logistics Brigade. In 1991, women started to join the Army one after another, and their number reached around 100. However, the subsequent years saw a mixed turnout, which remained mainly low. Thus, the presence of women in the Army during the past 26 years was symbolic. This continued until Army Commander, General Joseph Aoun, took over the leadership in March 2017. He made bold decisions in several areas within the institution, including raising the number of women by opening the door to recruitment as part of a strategic plan to achieve short, medium and long-term goals. This opened the door to a large number of Lebanese women, many of them holding university diplomas, to serve the nation with pride.

Joining combat units

According to records, more than 3,000 women joined the Army until March 2017. In less than a year since, the number jumped to about 4,000. Following military courses and trainings, they were assigned to various units and brigades even in combat roles, unlike in the past when their roles were largely limited to administration and logistics. Today, combat brigades and special units have their own female soldiers, in addition to their presence in operational units such as Military Police, border battalions, support and back up units, medical units and all command units.

Around 100 women have also joined the Presidential Guard after undergoing tough military training so that they are ready to assume the special security task of the Presidency.

At the operational level, female military personnel attend military courses just like





their male colleagues, including joint courses with UNIFIL peacekeepers in the south – in the fields of administration, logistics and health. The Army has also opened the door for them to attend courses abroad.

Currently, women soldiers make up about five per cent of the Lebanese Army's total strength, including three brigadier generals and 58 officers. The mentioned proportion can be increased according to the requirements and needs Army's Command strategy to strengthen this active participation that can boost and modernize the institution, and this is part of an integrated plan.

This confidence given by the Army Command to the women and the expected change in subsequent years have been recently demonstrated in handing over important administrative posts to a number of female officers.

Strategic choice

The decision of the military Army Command to strengthen the role of women in the Lebanese Army is a strategic choice, because of the unique characteristics and features the women possess. The Army Command also has not forgotten the moral value of this decision, in terms of achieving social and gender balance, and giving women the opportunity to prove their capabilities in a world largely characterized by muscle power and exclusive to men.

Women have proved that they are up to this confidence within a short period of time, and they are ready to go to the field, thereby achieving the Army Command's long-term objective.

There is no doubt that raising women's number in the Army contributes to the creation of social

stability, taking into consideration the revival of the middle class in the Lebanese society which has declined in recent years. In addition, it generates positive effects and implications in terms of strengthening the national sense, as well as the sense of belongingness and loyalty.

Between motherhood and military service

The most important challenge a woman faces in the military life is a set of obligations resulting from her biological nature, especially motherhood. However, the Army takes this into account as stipulated by the law. According to a number of mothers serving in the Army, military life did not affect their family life. Also, their "military face" did not hide the features of the female face, because women master the art of balance by nature.

The Army's Command is credited for its interest in the scientific and cultural aspects, as it encourages its military personnel, whether officers or soldiers, to continue their academic studies. The Army Command believes that knowledge and culture broadens the military vision and helps him develop ones acquaintance in decision-making. As a result of this, many female military personnel have continued their academic studies and have been promoted in ranks and tasks. Also, the new women in the service who are still studying, and contrary to the instructions that allowed the military to pursue academic studies after one year from joining the Army, have been allowed now by the Army's Command to continue their studies.

With the end of the year 2018, the Lebanese Army is entering the world of modernity and development, which is taking place in the framework of a rise in various fields, thus becoming the focus of foreign armies that seek to support it by various means.

The decision of the military Army Command to strengthen the role of women in the Lebanese Army is a strategic choice, because of the unique characteristics and features the women possess.

*(*A long-time reporter and photojournalist covering the UNIFIL area of operation in south Lebanon, Ms. Ronith Daher currently serves as Media Advisor to General Joseph Aoun, the Commander-In-Chief of the Lebanese Armed Forces. She was a frontline reporter during the 2006 war in south Lebanon and made a documentary film together with a group of journalists covering the war. Ms. Daher has also been a news reporter to various TV stations, local and international news agencies. She has also authored a book on her native Marjayoun, a district in south-eastern Lebanon.)*



UNIFIL head explains the making of FAST



One of the ideas was to involve female elements in some specific foot patrols during market days. The aim was to meet the Lebanese people, buy some products, and conduct the operational activity

The year 2015 marked a turning point in terms of highly increasing the participation of women in UNIFIL's operational activities and community interactions.

Although women constituted just above 3 per cent of the Mission's total uniformed personnel, with many contingents without having any female member, the establishment of Female Assessment/Analysis and Support

Team (FAST) in November 2015 ensured that each community interaction was conducted with the participation of female members. Each member of FAST is trained and on call for any operation requiring

women, particularly when a battalion does not have women troops. FAST became the central mechanism in lending support in the Mission's integrated activities, especially in the communities.



Reducing environmental footprint

From solar farms and sewage treatment plants in its headquarters in Naqoura to the building of a greenhouse out of recycled plastic bottles in a UNIFIL position near Kfar Shouba in south-eastern Lebanon, UNIFIL peacekeepers have been striving to protect the environment of the communities they serve.

One of the notable initiatives is the installation of hundreds of solar panels at its headquarters, generating about 6.5 per cent of the total electricity consumption. In addition, they not only treat the sewage originating from the base, but also the wastewater originating from the Naqoura Municipality. About 2,800 residents of Naqoura are connected to the UNIFIL sewage treatment plant.

In many of the 55 UN positions spread across the 1,060 square kilometre UNIFIL area of operation, its peacekeepers have also applied innovative ways to reduce their environment footprint.

While Nepalese peacekeepers have re-purposed single use plastic bottles into plant pots, Indian peacekeepers have built a greenhouse out of recycled plastic bottles. Likewise, marking World Environment Day on 5 June 2018, Italian peacekeepers donated 30,000 single-use water bottles and as many bottle caps, collected over a period of 20 days, to a local non-governmental organization working in the field of environment.

Tilak Pokharel - Strategic Communication

What's interesting is that UNIFIL's current Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major General Stefano Del Col, was serving as the Mission's Sector West Commander in late 2014 when the idea of FAST was conceived. He played a key role in incorporating women in operational and community activities – especially foot patrols, check points, market walks and community interactions – which was the basis of what was to become FAST.

"We thought a new way to conduct foot patrols inside the villages," he reminisces, four years on. "One of the ideas we considered and we launched was to involve female elements in some specific foot patrols during market days inside the villages. The aim was to meet the Lebanese people, buy some products, and at the same time conduct the operational activity."

Major General Del Col thinks that the establishment of FAST has significantly enhanced UNIFIL's force acceptance in the 1,060 area of operation in south Lebanon.

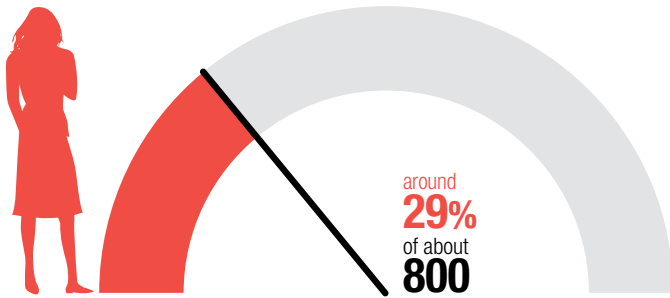
He says that FAST has served as a "permanent bridge" between the peacekeepers and the communities, especially the women who make up more than half of approximately 450,000 people living in the UNIFIL area of operation. "Our idea was to have more involvement of

UNIFIL female peacekeepers, who could better interact with female population and their children in a culturally accepted way," he adds. "We know that women have different concerns than men and we want to listen to these voices and FAST facilitated that. In the end, it worked really well."

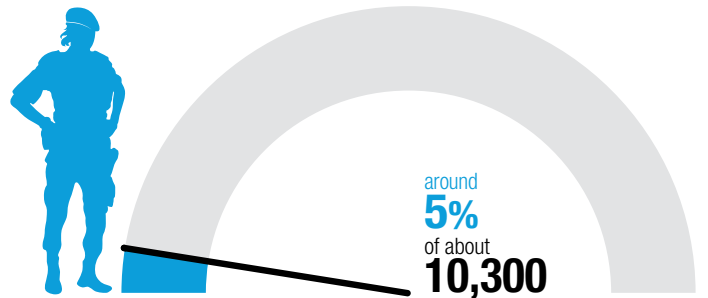
Echoing the calls of Secretary-General António Guterres and in line with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, Major General Del Col says the support of troop-contributing countries is crucial in attaining an enhanced female participation in peacekeeping operations. Security Council Resolution 2433 (2018), which called for the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of its operations, including with the Lebanese authorities, has enhanced the overall participation of women in the implementation of UNIFIL's mandate.

Led by the Mission's Gender Advisory Unit, FAST is comprised of trained military and civilian personnel, who work in the communities through three women's working groups – in Tyre, Bint Jbeil and Marjayoun. These working groups are key to ensuring conducive environment on the ground for UNIFIL peacekeepers to operate in the communities.

Tilak Pokharel - Strategic Communication

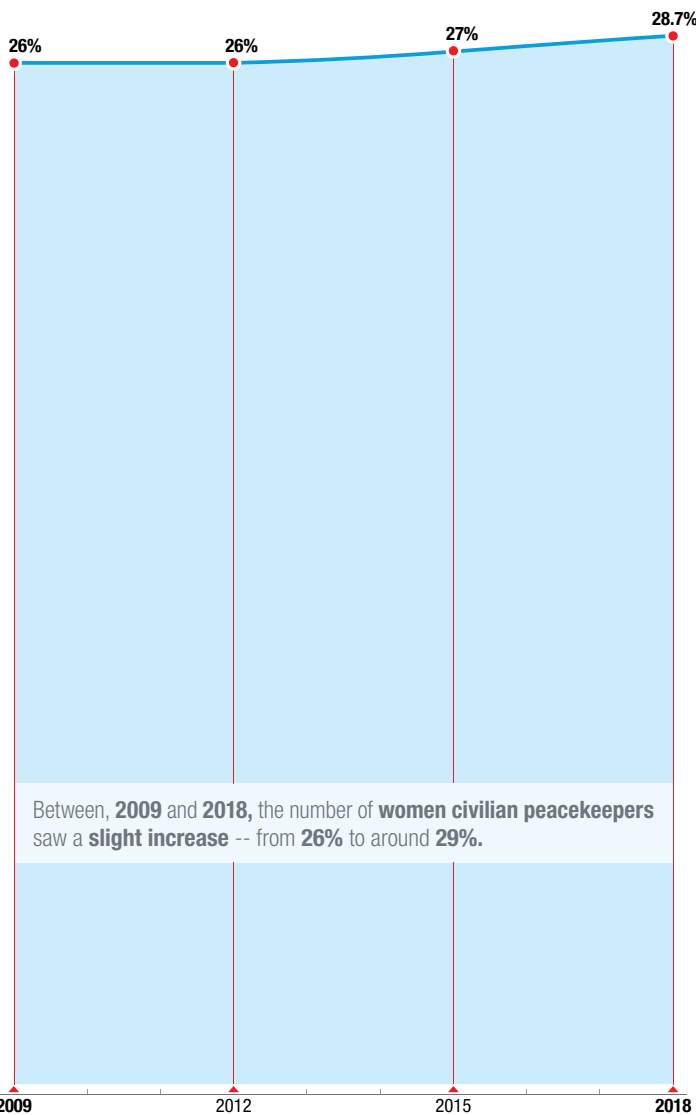


Women Civilian Peacekeepers

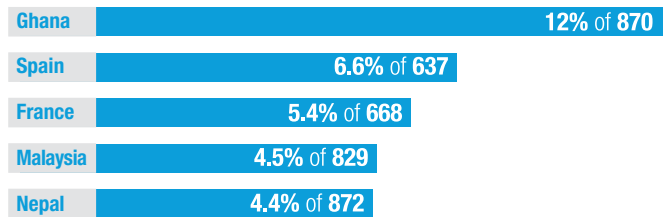


Women Military Peacekeepers

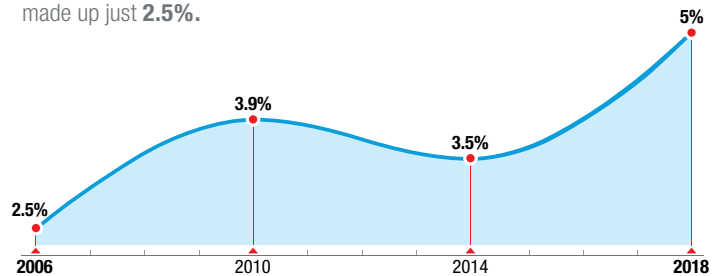
In **August 2018**, the **UN Security Council** requested the **Secretary-General** and troop-contributing countries to seek **to increase the number of women in UNIFIL**, as well as to ensure the meaningful participation of women in operations.



As at 31 December 2018, among UNIFIL's **43 troop contributing countries**, **Ghana, Spain, France, Malaysia** and **Nepal** have the **highest percentage** of women in uniform.



As at **31 December 2018**, women account for about **5%** of UNIFIL's **10,300 peacekeepers**. **12 years ago**, the **Mission's female troops** made up just **2.5%**.



Advancing women peacekeepers' role in UNIFIL

With a greater push for gender mainstreaming in United Nations peacekeeping, over the past years UNIFIL - backed by a slight increase in the number of women peacekeepers - has carried out a number of activities within the Mission's area of operation by incorporating gender perspective while performing its mandated tasks.

As at 31 December 2018, UNIFIL has 513 women peacekeepers, accounting for about five per cent of about 10,300 troops. The Mission's women peacekeepers made up 3.4 per cent five years ago and just 2.5 per cent 12 years ago in 2006.

Adopting a landmark resolution on Women, Peace and Security in 2000, the UN Security Council called on all Member States to encourage female participation in UN peacekeeping missions. In the following years, there has been an increased awareness on gendered impact of conflict and the importance of women in peacekeeping missions. This is crucial at the community engagement level, where women peacekeepers can better interact with women and girls in the communities to establish trust and break down cultural barriers. Women's participation in peacekeeping also strengthens the political and operational levels.

UNIFIL's Gender Advisor, Afaf Omer, says women's participation in peacekeeping operations is important for many reasons that are often inextricably linked.

"The presence of women peacekeepers enables peacekeeping operations to better protect citizens, in particular women and children, as their presence brings greater awareness of and sensitivity to their particular needs and challenges and also because the presence of female peacekeepers is often less intimidating or provocative to the community

they serve," says Ms. Omer. "There are also practical advantages to the presence of women peacekeepers as they are able to interact with women at checkpoints, and can establish better relationships with local women's groups."

UNIFIL, since the establishment of Female Assessment/Analysis and Support Team (FAST) in November 2015, there have been an increase in the number of community activities involving women and children. FAST is made up of both uniformed and civilian UNIFIL peacekeepers based across UNIFIL's 1,060 square kilometre area of operation. Each member of the team is trained and on call for any operation where they are needed, particularly when a battalion does not have available women troops to participate in an operation.

FAST activities vary from operational to community outreach, including foot and market patrols, school visits, as well as other community engagements.

"Women peacekeepers can also serve as role models or even mentors for local women and girls, thus contributing to more equal gender relations in the local community they serve," says Omer.

Each UNIFIL battalion has a military gender task force, which ensures that each of the Mission's more than 450 daily activities is gender sensitive and in full compliance with the resolution 1325 and relevant UN policies.

Tilak Pokharel - Strategic Communication



Did you know? Spain

The geographical location of the Kingdom of Spain in south-western Europe places the country with a unique strategic value: projected into the Mediterranean on one side, and as a critical pause on the way to Africa or America on the other. The fact that a large part of Spain is a peninsular also explains the length of its coastline, which runs 4,000 kilometres along the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

Spain is, above all, a mosaic of cultures. The Iberian Peninsula was once a crossroads of civilizations – including the Jewish, Christian and Islamic – while Seville was the primary gateway for trade and travel between Europe and the Americas. In that sense, Spain is both old and modern, refined and popular, holy and secular.

The Spanish culture is extremely rich and touches upon all forms of artistic expression: from literature to painting, music to architecture, the theatre to sumptuary arts. In each of these aspects, at some point of time in history, Spanish culture has reached the highest artistic pinnacle: from bygone times (with outstanding examples of cave art) until present day (a time in which Spanish architecture is universally avant-garde). This explains why culture and art have always been the prominent features of the country.

Spain is a country with the second highest number of UNESCO World Heritage sites. The Alhambra, Generalife and Albayzín, in Granada; the Archaeological Ensemble of Mérida; both Santiago's and Burgos's Cathedrals; the Palaeolithic Cave of Altamira; the old cities of Salamanca, Ávila, Cáceres or Segovia... they are all but just a few examples of those many cultural goods we have. The list goes on and on.

Spain is firmly committed to international peace and security and has adopted a multidisciplinary approach to all concerns. To this end, international activity has been increased through defence diplomacy as well as active participation in various comprehensive groups.

For global peace and security, Spain not only contributes to and participates in the United Nations peacekeeping operations, but it also actively takes part in operations with other international organizations such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

More than 130,000 soldiers of the Spanish Armed Forces have contributed since 1989 to international peace and security in all regions of the world. At present, Spain is involved in 18 missions abroad with more than 3,000 military and civilian members deployed in four continents. Our contingents in Lebanon – with over 600 blue helmets – and in Iraq with almost 500 troops, serving in a NATO mission, are the most numerous ones.

Members of the Spanish Armed Forces were first deployed in Lebanon in September 2006. Since then, more than 22,000 soldiers have taken part in the UNIFIL mission. The most important part of the Spanish contingent is located at the Base "Miguel de Cervantes" near Marjayoun. Spanish Brigadier General Antonio Romero is the current commander of UNIFIL's operations in the Sector East region.

Since the beginning of its participation in Lebanon, 13 Spanish soldiers have lost their lives while serving for peace in south Lebanon.

Today, the bulk of the Spanish contingent comes from the Light Infantry Airborne Brigade "Galicia" VII (known as BRILAT). The BRILAT is a military unit especially trained for fighting in

wooded areas, as well as difficult terrains and diverse climate conditions. This unit has served in Lebanon twice earlier, in 2007 and 2009.

Brigadier General Romero says: "We fight for peace in this blessed land like if it were our own country."

Lt. Col. Rafael Gómez Escalante - UNIFIL Sector East



Children benefit from UNIFIL's community outreach activities



Armed with stationery items, geometry boxes, bags, umbrellas, toys, and Mr. and Mrs. Blue Barrels, UNIFIL's community outreach peacekeepers - from Indonesia and Italy - reached Yarin Public School in a sunny November morning. The aim was two-fold: raise awareness among the children of the school on the work of the UN mission, especially the sensitivities around the Blue Line; and distribute gifts.

It was like a festival for the 180 children of the school, which sits in the rural hinterlands of south-western Lebanon. The children attending the school are from the nearby villages, for whom the Blue Line and the barrels visibly marking the Line are everyday scenes.

When First Sergeant Venny Greace of Indonesia asked the children what UNIFIL peacekeepers do in south Lebanon, about two-thirds of the children raised hands.

Some of those who got the opportunity to speak said: "conduct patrols and remove mines; ensure safety to the population working together with the Lebanese Army."

In her presentation, while explaining the dangers of making any attempt to cross the Blue Line, First Sergeant Greace said:

"Marking the Blue Line is the process of installing blue barrels on agreed locations by both parties (Lebanon and Israel). This is also about ensuring security for the populations livings near the Line."

After the presentation, all the children were happy to receive gifts.

Habib Aziz of UNIFIL Civil Affairs Office says school activities like the one in Yarin promotes the understanding of UNIFIL's work in south Lebanon.

Among three categories of school outreach activities - road safety, commemoration of international days and humanitarian - about 50 per cent are conducted with the UNIFIL's Military Community Outreach Unit (MCOU) of which First Sergeant Greace is a member.

According to MCOU Commander Major Giovanni Ministeri, about 1,400 children in 15 schools were reached with his unit's outreach campaign during the last quarter of 2018.

The director of Yarin Public School, Hassan Ismail, says such UNIFIL activities are very beneficial for the children.

"We live in the hinterlands, far from the cities, and you find all the entertainment and recreational activities in central towns," says Mr. Ismail.

"These activities are useful for us for more than one reason - besides education, it teaches the students organization, patience, a sense of diversity and the integration of diverse cultures."

Tilak Pokharel - Strategic Communication

How much do you know about UNIFIL?

UNIFIL peacekeepers have been in south Lebanon since 1978. In August, 2006, UN Security Council Resolution 1701 was adopted giving the Mission its current mandate. Since then, with thanks to the commitment of the parties, there has been more than 12 years of unprecedented calm and stability. **Here you can test your knowledge about UNIFIL and its work.**

1. At the end of 2006, women constituted just about 2.5% of UNIFIL's total troops strength (11,563). Since then, there has been a slight increase in the number of women peacekeepers with UNIFIL. **Can you guess the percentage of women accounting for the current total of about 10,300 troops (as at 31 December 2018)?**

- a 5% b 10% c 15% d 20%

2. Which one of the following does not fall under UNIFIL's mandate?

- a Assist the Lebanese Armed Forces
- b Assist the Government in ensuring the return of effective state authority in south Lebanon
- c Monitor the cessation of hostilities
- d Assist in demarcating the maritime border between Lebanon and Israel

3. UNIFIL's Maritime Task Force (MTF) is the first and only major naval component of a UN peacekeeping mission operating at sea. Deployed at the request of the Government of Lebanon, this Force has been assisting and training the Lebanese Navy in securing the territorial waters and to help prevent the unauthorized entry of arms or related material by sea into Lebanon. Since 2006, 15 countries have contributed naval troops and ships to UNIFIL. **Can you guess how many countries are there with UNIFIL MTF today?**

- a 6 b 18 c 30 d 42

4. UNIFIL's Female Assessment/ Analysis and Support Team (FAST) is made up of both uniformed and civilian peacekeepers. Each member of the team is trained and on-call for any operation where they are needed, particularly when a contingent does not have in hand women troops to participate in an operation. **When was this initiative launched?**

- a November 2015 c November 2005
 b November 2010 d November 2000

5. Which one of the following falls under UNIFIL's mandate?

- a Disarm illegal armed groups
- b Ensure general security and law enforcement
- c Assist the Government of Lebanon in ensuring its full authority south of the Litani river
- d Lead the country-wide security sector reform, which addresses the issue of weapons

6. Since 1978, the UN Security Council has adopted a number of resolutions in relation to UNIFIL. **Which such resolution forms the core of UNIFIL's current mandate?**

- a 321 b 529 c 1701 d 2000

7. Through the adoption of Resolution 1701 in 2006, the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of up to 15,000 peacekeepers in UNIFIL. The actual current number stands just above 10,000. But when the Mission was established on 19 March 1978, the authorized number was much lower. **Can you guess how many?**

- a 1,000 b 4,000 c 10,000 d 20,000

8. UNIFIL is assisted in carrying out its mandate by more than 50 observers from Observer Group Lebanon, an unarmed military mission present in Lebanon since 1949. In Lebanon, they are under operational control of the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander. **But which UN mission do they belong to?**

- a UNDOF - UN Disengagement Observer Force c UNSCOL - UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon
 b UNTSO - UN Truce Supervision Organization d UNRWA - UN Relief and Works Agency

Answers are on **page number 18**. But some of the answers can be found in other articles of this magazine.

VOX POPULI

Women play an increasingly significant role in the Lebanese society, not least in maintaining and furthering peace and development. It's all the more important in UNIFIL's areas of operation, which has witnessed a multitude of conflicts in different points of time. **Hiba Monzer** of **"Al-Janoub"** met with a number of Lebanese women from different walks and life in south Lebanon and asked them:

"Why do you think it's important that women are represented in all spheres of life and in your opinion, how does that contribute to furthering peace and development?" Here are excerpts.

Fatima Charaf Eddine
Author of books for children and teenagers, Tyre



Women represent half the society. Women have duties and rights and activating woman's role would produce a balanced society. Women can take part in leading change only when they get involved in the political life. As a woman, I would like to be distinguished only through what I achieve at career and professional levels. I can realize the change I seek through my work as a writer. Women are like men and should discover the source of their creativity to achieve change and participate in the society. When women achieve an equal status to men's - regarding duties and rights - they will be moving forward towards a developed society and a peaceful life.

Georgina Nehmetallah:
Pharmacist, Qolaiaa



A family without a working woman cannot advance. Women grant any sector they join a particular characteristic due to women's creative nature, which is far from harshness, conflict, and collision. Women's nature helps build unity, partnership, unified education, common grounds in one society and social peace. For example, my husband and I organize campaigns and meetings targeting parents, teenagers, and couples, in cooperation with the church and JAD NGO [Youth Against Drugs], to raise awareness on marriage and family relations on the one hand, and fighting drugs and addiction on the other. As a woman and a mother, understanding other women's concerns would come up with more constructive results. I wish that women in Lebanon be involved in politics to attain better results, because accomplishing peace is the path to establishing democracy and freedom.

Lamia Sweid
Accountant at construction company, Debbin



Media, laws, international campaigns helped women develop their role in the society. Peace will grant women the opportunity to study and work; hence, women would play a changing role in bringing up educated and open-minded children and consequently would be changing the society. Speaking about women's nature, their emotional nature is their tool for peace.

Iman Jaffal Abou Khalil
Yoga trainer, Tyre



Activating woman's role in the society will put an end to the suffering and despotic practices against her; being involved with all what revolves around her would help her contribute in society and complete the "other half" of the community. Women should be allowed to take part in politics and decision-making as this would help better address her needs and grant her better opportunities. Women's participation in the process of building societies would limit violence and women's victimization.

Sabah Abou Abbas
Head of Khiyam Women Association for Development, Khiyam



Women are the weakest party in hardship and conflicts, women are marginalized and laws do not support them enough. Women in Lebanon are educated but still feel inferior, adding to this there are certain obstacles preventing women from being represented in the government and the parliament. But how can social problems related to women be resolved amid absence of laws that enforce related action? How can appropriate laws be legislated without involving the main concerned party in the process of decision making? The work of NGOs and women's groups need to be supported by proper laws to achieve the desired result.

Zahraa Sh'aityl
UNIFIL's women focal point [2019] - Pharmacist at UNIFIL hospital, Burj Shemali



Giving women the opportunity to actively take part in the political decision-making would lead to changing women's roles and to having influence on the society. Given women's nature, they would shift the society's culture to a constructive and developmental one. To lead this change, women should be represented at social, political, military, security, economic, educational, and humanitarian levels. By achieving equality, women would live in a just society that respects equality in rights and duties; women and peace are two equivalents. Women's participation in political decision would guarantee the realization of a balanced leadership to build comprehensive peace, supported by resolutions and accords that aim at conflict resolutions and protection of women against gender violence and discrimination.



Role of women in the Lebanese Army

Throughout history, in all nations and civilizations, women have played different roles and have had significant influence in the military battles and conflicts: they commanded armies, participated directly in combats or provided logistical and administrative support.

Modern armies are providing women with the opportunity to bear more responsibilities. In Lebanon, the General Directorate of General Security became the first security branch in the 1970s to recruit women. The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) followed suit in the early 1990s.

The legal foundation for the recruitment of women in the Lebanese Army was first laid by the ministerial decision number 376 of 8 September 1989. On 9 January 1990, LAF command put the process into practice

by issuing a memorandum calling upon Lebanese women to enroll as privates in the air and naval forces, the military school, the military police, the logistic brigade, the signal regiment and the presidential guard brigade.

In 1992, 32 women holding degrees in dentistry and business administration joined the first mixed course for specialized officers in the military school. In addition, starting from 1994, women holding degrees in medicine, information technology and management fields were

enrolled at ranks from Corporal up to Adjutant.

Since then, Lebanese women not only started to play an important role in the military but also their role grew over time and is no more limited to administrative or technical duties.

Today's LAF, commanded by General Joseph Aoun, follows a strategic vision in significantly expanding women's role within various strata of the army, as a way of developing the organization into a modern army. According



to the LAF website, General Aoun says: “Recruiting female soldiers in the military institution will continue in order to boost the role of female soldiers and increase their number in the future, based on the army’s belief in equality between all citizens and their participation together in developing the country and defending it.”

The new LAF initiative has strong backing of the National Commission of Lebanese Women (NCLW). The President of the Commission, Claudine Aoun Roukoz, says NCLW is working with the Army Command, the Ministry of Defence and the Internal Security Forces to develop a plan of action to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The milestone United Nations resolution, adopted on 31 October 2000, calls upon Member States to increase women’s participation at all levels of decision-making.

Lebanon is witnessing a qualitative leap in terms of the active involvement of women in the ranks of the army. Their numbers have increased to more than 4,000, with almost 2,000 recruited in 2018 alone, and distributed across all units. They have also risen to leadership positions, with three Brigadier Generals and 15 Colonels.

According to the LAF, these women have proven over the years to be successful in all missions and are now even assigned to combat units. With their capabilities and energy, they have become an added value to the military establishment.

Dany Ghafary - Strategic Communication



Mirine Abichaker

Lebanon finalizing national plan on women

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security was adopted by the Security Council on 31 October 2000. This resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations and peacekeeping, among others. It also highlights the importance of women’s equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

In 2018 Prime Minister Saad Hariri asked the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW) to develop and deliver, for the first time, Lebanon’s National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325.

“We are now finalizing the wording of the NAP,” says Mirine Abichaker, who is chair of the steering committee responsible for delivering the Action Plan. “It is not about recommendations; it is a detailed four-year action plan with specific targets that should be achieved.”

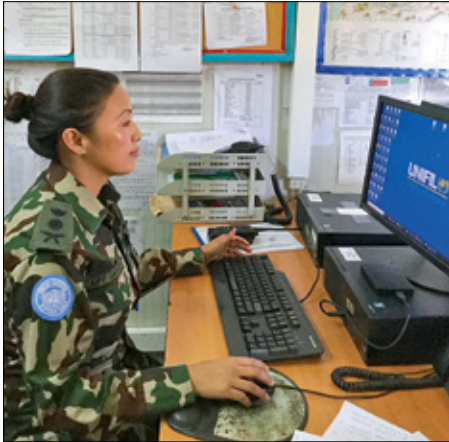
The committee developed the action plan through a participatory approach engaging governmental institutions and civil society organizations. This process included six meetings in three months on women’s participation in various aspects of Lebanese life.

The NAP includes activities that fall under five strategic priorities: Women’s participation in decision-making at all levels, prevention of conflicts, prevention and protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, relief and recovery, and the last priority covers the laws that need to be amended or drafted to achieve the goals and to ensure equal rights among all citizens.

Once approved by National Commission for Lebanese Women, this national plan will be sent to the Office of the Prime Minister for adoption.

Aoibheann O’Sullivan - Strategic Communication

Nepalese peacekeeper and mother of two makes a mark in gender mainstreaming



Thirty-two-year old Ishwori Thakuri left behind two young daughters, aged six and two, in her native Nepal to serve for peace in south Lebanon. In her 13 months with UNIFIL from October 2017 to November 2018, her first time ever in a UN peacekeeping operation, she made a mark.

Thanks to Captain Thakuri and her dedicated team, Nepalese peacekeepers were instrumental in furthering gender mainstreaming across a wide range of activities they conducted daily.

Immediately after arriving in the mission, Capt. Thakuri, the gender focal point for her battalion, realized that including gender elements in daily activities would help improve community engagements and communication.

“In the southern towns and villages, local women might avoid bringing up their problems to a man, especially during medical campaigns,” said Capt. Thakuri, who also served as welfare officer and operation duty officer in the battalion. “So, having women in the medical team would ensure that all locals get the treatment and attention they needed.”

In addition, she continued, women’s presence in patrols has a positive impact on the perception of the Mission by better allowing for local women to communicate and get answers for the questions they might have.

In wider UNIFIL, since the establishment of Female Assessment/Analysis and Support Team (FAST) in November 2015, there has been an increase in the number of community engagement activities involving women and children. FAST is made up of both uniformed and civilian UNIFIL peacekeepers based across UNIFIL’s 1,060 square kilometre area of operation. Each member of the team, like Capt. Thakuri, is trained and on-call for any operation where they are needed, particularly when a battalion does not have available

women troops to participate in an operation.

Capt. Thakuri established a gender desk within the Nepalese Battalion (NEPBATT), comprising five gender focal points, and published gender pocket cards that listed the do’s and don’ts for the troops on the ground. With her initiative, NEPBATT also constructed a “gender-friendly” bunker. Thakuri underlined that gender awareness has improved as well as cooperation among the peacekeepers themselves, and among troops from different countries, creating a friendly environment that nurtures mutual cooperation and vision.

UNIFIL’s Gender Affairs Officer, Rana Rahal, who coordinates activities with gender focal points and FAST members, said Capt. Thakuri recognized different needs of women and men, boys and girls that are intrinsically linked to local culture and traditions, making an impact during assignments involving mixed teams.

“Capt. Ishwori took her tasks as a gender focal point to a higher level in promoting the role women play in peacekeeping operations and giving high visibility to the contribution to a major part of the local population, which is women and girls,” said Ms. Rahal.

The Nepalese Army started recruiting women in technical service in 1961, and in 2004 it started hiring them for general services as well. Currently, among the officers of the Nepalese Army, there are 156 women in the general categories and 183 on the technical sides. Its highest ranking incumbent woman officer is a Brigadier General, who works on the technical side.

Hiba Monzer - Strategic Communication



ZERO TOLERANCE
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

Ensuring highest standards of conduct and behaviour

UNIFIL is committed to ensuring that its personnel act in accordance with the highest standards of conduct and behaviour. As proud peacekeepers:

- we treat the population of Lebanon with respect and dignity at all times;
- we always uphold the highest standards of conduct expected of UN civil servants;
- we will never threaten the lives of the people that we are to serve and protect;
- we will never engage in a behavior that undermines discipline, and damages the reputation of the United Nations and our national flags.

If you observe any behaviour that might fall short of these high standards, please let us know by contacting the Regional Conduct and Discipline Section by e-mail unifil-cdu@un.org or on 01-926 215/6/7/8/9

Check your answers here

- 1- [a] 5%
- 2- [d] Assist in demarcating the maritime border between Lebanon and Israel
- 3- [a] 6
- 4- [a] November 2015
- 5- [c] Assist the Government of Lebanon in ensuring its full authority south of the Litani river
- 6- [c] 1701
- 7- [b] 4,000
- 8- [b] UNTSO - UN Truce Supervision Organization

National Recruitment in UNIFIL

As of 1 January 2017, UNIFIL National positions have been advertised electronically on the United Nations Careers Portal <http://careers.un.org>

When applying to a job opening, be sure to submit your application well before the deadline stated in the job opening.

All applications shall be in the Personal History Profile (PHP) format. You may create your PHP using the inspira web-based tool - <https://inspira.un.org>. Also, ensure that relevant supporting documents are attached in Inspira.

Once you apply to a job opening, your application will go through an automated pre-screening process. The process checks the information you entered in your application against the eligibility criteria established for that job opening.

Only candidates who meet the set criteria of the job opening will be shortlisted and contacted by the Human Resources Management Section to undergo an assessment and/or a competency-based interview.

Preference will be given to equally qualified women candidates.

UNIFIL does not charge a fee at any stage of the recruitment process (application, interview meeting, processing, training or any other fees).

For more information please visit our website:
<http://unifil.unmissions.org/jobs>

UNIFIL: We Work With You

From joint training to medical visits, this is a new TV/Web series highlighting UNIFIL's collaboration with Lebanese security forces and civic organizations to support local communities and maintain peace. Twice a month on *NBN, OTV, New TV* and YouTube.



Every two weeks a new 10-minute radio episode is aired in Arabic on: *Al-Risala, Sawt El-Mada, Voice of Lebanon, Voice of People* and *Radio Delta*.

Check unifil.unmissions.org to watch and read a weekly multimedia report on one of over 450 UNIFIL activities that happen every single day in south Lebanon.



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