

## **Summary of UNIS Events to Commemorate International Day of Peacekeepers**

On the occasion of International Day of Peacekeepers, commemorated on 29 May, UNIS Vienna participated in the annual Blue Helmut Forum Austria, organized by the Austrian Blue Helmet Association on 30 May 2005. Nasra Hassan, Director, UNIS and Spokesperson, UNODC, was one of the main speakers at the event, which was held on the general topic of "Peace Soldiering".

The international forum aims at enabling information exchange on experiences regarding specific military aspects of "Peace Support Operations" between military experts in the field. General Günther G. Greindl (retd.), President, Austrian Blue Helmet Association, opened the session. Ms. Hassan spoke on the subject "UN and civil society partnerships in support of peacekeeping operations", with a focus on the role of civilian components, civil society and "Peace soldiering". Her presentation included references to the report of the Secretary-General Kofi Annan titled *In Larger Freedom*. She also read out the message of the Secretary-General to mark the occasion.

Senior individuals working in the field of peacekeeping attended the event. In addition to a number of high-ranking officials from the Austrian Ministry of Defence, there were also representatives of Blue Helmet Associations from a number of troop-contributing countries, representatives of SHIRBRIG, and experts and historians. General Roland Ertl, Chief of General Staff Austria, welcomed participants.

The leading Austrian daily Die Presse, one of the co-sponsors of the event, was present at the Forum and will carry a major piece on it this week.

UNIS Vienna also distributed the latest information material related to peacekeeping at the event, including copies of Review of Peace Operations 2004 and the Secretary-General's message.

UNIS Vienna also issued a press release in English and German (attached) focussed on its client countries to mark the occasion.

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