

## *The Royal Canadian Dental Corps:*

# UNIFICATION AND UNITED NATIONS OPERATIONS

Canada's military dental services have looked after the oral health needs of Canada's troops in both World Wars, Korea, Afghanistan and many other peacemaking, peacekeeping, humanitarian and forensic operations. In the lead-up to the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Dental Corps (RCDC) in 2015, this article is the fourth in a series that will bring to light the history of the RCDC over the last century, celebrating the heritage, accomplishments and dedication of the dental services personnel of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).

equipment and has resulted in a high standard of dental treatment to all three services on an equitable basis. It has thus required little modification in order to adapt to the unification of the Canadian Forces."



**CDA***essentials* is honoured to publish a regular series of articles, leading up to the celebration of RCDC's 100th anniversary.



### Canadian Armed Forces Unification, 1968

In 1968, the Royal Canadian Navy, Canadian Army, and Royal Canadian Air Force were merged into one service: the Canadian Armed Forces. As RCDC personnel were already providing dental care to all three services, unification had minimal impact on their operations. However, RCDC was reorganized into the Dental Branch, renamed the Canadian Forces Dental Services (CFDS), and issued a new cap badge.

In his letter of congratulations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Dental Corps, the Honourable Paul Hellyer, Minister of National Defence at the time, commented: "The tri-service role of the Corps since 1939 has permitted the ready adoption of new techniques and

### United Nations Emergency Force Middle East (UNEF II) 1973–1979

In 1973, the Second United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF II) was established in the Middle East to supervise the ceasefire between Egyptian and Israeli forces and, after 1975, to supervise the redeployment of Egyptian and Israeli forces and control the buffer zones. Headquartered in Ismailia, Egypt, troops were deployed to the Suez Canal sector and, later, the Sinai Peninsula.

In support of UNEF II, the RCDC deployed dental teams to the Middle East. The RCDC clinic started out in a tent, moved to a race-track observation tower in a Cairo suburb and finally settled in a building in Ismailia.


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## United Nations Forces in Cyprus (Operation SNOWGOOSE) 1963–1994

In 1963, Canada offered military support to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). The first dental detachment arrived in the capital city of Nicosia in 1964.

In 1967, the Canadian contingent moved from the battered and rusted tin huts of Troodos Camp to the former Royal Air Force Station in Nicosia. The dental detachment was continuously staffed until 1994, when the Canadian battalion was withdrawn.

The only other dental team attached to UNFICYP was from the British Royal Army Dental Corps. It was

common practice for the two teams to alternate their on-call responsibilities and cover each other's patients during absences due to leave or travel. The Canadian team also provided emergency dental care to other troop contingents, including those from Austria and Denmark. 

**CDA is playing a central role in commemorating the 100th anniversary of the RCDC in May 2015, reflecting CDA's role played in establishing a military dental service in Canada and the close partnership between CDA and RCDC since that time.**



1

- 1 United Nations peacekeeping force in Cyprus - Canadian Contingent Dental Clinic, 1992
- 2 Dental officer performs dental exam on patient outdoors in Cyprus, 1969
- 3 United Nations cap badge



2



3