

PEACE PRIZE HONOUR

WHEN Sergeant Kathy Burdett left Canberra in April last year to serve in the Australian Contingent to Cyprus, she had no idea she would be taking part in a ceremony that made the world spotlight.

Kathy is the first female member of the AFP to be posted to Cyprus.

In December last year, she was selected to represent the UN Civilian Police in Cyprus at the ceremony in Sweden to mark the presentation of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations.

"It was the trip of my lifetime and what an honour to be the Australian representative," she said. "I felt very proud and only wish every Australian who has served with the United Nations could have experienced it."

The award was made to the UN for its dedication to international peace and security.

Sergeant Burdett was one of three members of the UN Forces in Cyprus chosen as part of a Guard of Honour at the ceremony.

"People were pleased to see a female United Nations representative and I was asked many questions about my position, Cyprus and Australia," she said.

The Oslo trip began on Friday 9 December when she and two military members, one from Canada and the other from Denmark, were taken to



Members of UNCIVPOL receive congratulations from Sergeant Hengst after a medal presentation. Sergeant Kathy Burdett is pictured right.

Larnaca to link up with 12 other UN representatives for departure to Sweden.

"On arrival at Fornebu Airport we were assembled in the VIP lounge and welcomed," she said. "We were also advised at this time of the members selected to be the Guard of Honour for the ceremony. I was one."

The group was accommodated at an army academy.

"My room looked out onto a snow-covered forest," she said.

At a rehearsal the same day, Kathy had her first sight of the actual Nobel Peace Prize — a solid gold medallion and a framed certificate.

The presentation ceremony was held on Saturday.

"The Honour Guard preceded the King of Norway and the Royal Family as we walked down the aisle towards the stage behind two United Nations flags," Kathy said. "Everyone in the hall stood up and clapped. What a moving experience for us all."

The actual ceremony took about an hour and included speeches by the Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, Mr Brian Urquhart, and the Secretary General, Perez de Cuellar.

The Memorial Service was held at the main church in the centre of Oslo and this again proved an emotional experience for Kathy.

"The relatives of those who have died in United Nations service were seated opposite us at the front of the church and most were in tears," she said. "The whole service was in Norwegian, but that did not detract from the feeling of the service."

"The occasion was a memorable and significant one," Kathy said. "The feeling I got during my time in Oslo was that the people felt the UN was a very worthy recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize."



Northwind Patrol, a regular supply run carrying foodstuffs to members of the Maronite community. Superintendent Frank Pimm, left, supervises the distribution of the supplies.