On 19 December 2019, the UNGSC had the extraordinary privilege and honour to celebrate its 25th anniversary in Brindisi with the UN Secretary General, Mr António Guterres, and the Undersecretary General for the Department of Operational Support, Mr Atul Khare.

The event took place inside three large hangars, dressed up for the occasion with the 193 flags of the UN member states. It opened with the Italian National Anthem played by the Italian Navy Fanfare and sung by the students of the Brindisi European High school.

Truly inspirational speeches were delivered by the UNGSC Director, Ms Giovanna Ceglie, the Mayor of Brindisi, Mr Riccardo Rossi, who also presented the symbolic key to the City to Mr Guterres, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Luigi Di Maio, the Director General of Political Affairs of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Marcos Gómez Martínez, and then the UN Secretary General, Mr António Guterres.

Throughout 2019 many initiatives and projects were undertaken by staff to celebrate this important anniversary, and several of them were presented on 19 December.

Mr Guterres cut the ribbon inaugurating the UNGSC Gallery, a 25-year time line of UNLB’s transformation into UNGSC; composed of panels fixed on a wooden structure, unfolding from its centre - the beginning - along a spiral designing the Golden Ratio, aka as the Fibonacci’s Sequence: the universal symbol of balance and limitless transformation.

There was the unveiling of Mr Guterres’ oil portrait, the culmination of the series of portraits of all UNGSC former and present Chief Administrative Officers and Directors, since 1994, painted by a very talented artist and UN colleague.

Mr Guterres received the first copy of the UNGSC Limited Edition 25th Anniversary Book, a collection of memories, anecdotes, reflections, photos and watercolours by UNGSC staff, and special messages from friends and supporters at all levels who honoured the initiative with their precious insight.

Inside the hangars there were also booths and stands showcasing the activities of sections and units of the three UNGSC services, tenant units and local partners of the UNGSC.

It was a truly remarkable way to celebrate a quarter century of the UN in Brindisi! It was the sort of event that leaves behind a great sense of pride and accomplishment, but also an urge to go forward with renewed energy!
Spotlight on
...those who took it on working tirelessly night and day to live up to the expectations
...those who shared the magic of complicity

...our history on the spiralling panels of the Gallery, tracing a perfect highway towards the future, in that one direction, knowing deep down that there is a sense in everything we went through
...our past and present leaders, the poise and weight of their responsibility painted in the wrinkles of their portraits.

...our steadfast friends and colleagues.

...our trusted friends and partners.
Behind that green gate...

This book is our way of celebrating UNGSC’s 25th Anniversary, through a collection of memories, anecdotes, reflections, photos and even watercolour drawings from a travel diary… along a timeline punctuated by our former and present Chief Administrative Officers and Directors.

It is a celebration of the spirit that has characterized UNGSC since the early days, and that, we hope, has made a difference in the lives of many colleagues in missions worldwide, it is our way of saying: I was there!

We take this opportunity to thank all UNGSC friends and supporters, at all levels, who have honoured this initiative with their precious insight and most welcomed best wishes.

THE UNGSC STAFF

All of this took place in front of the man, who advocates sustainable development as the sole path to save our planet.

Indeed, knowing what we know now, his farsightedness could not have been more appropriate.

...the weave of our stories and our lives “Behind that Green Gate”

...this bridge-building city where East meets West and everything started