

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE ON THE  
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF  
UNITED NATIONS  
PEACEKEEPERS**

**29 May 2012**

The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is an occasion to salute the 120,000 peacekeepers serving in 17 missions in some of the world's most volatile and dangerous environments.

This Day is also a time to mourn fallen peacekeepers. In 2011, 112 men and women died devoting their lives to peace. In the first four months of this year, another 27 peacekeepers have died while serving the United Nations.

Today we honour the memory of the more than 2,900 peacekeepers who have lost their lives in the line of duty over the years, and we pledge to carry on their work to bring stability to war-ravaged countries.

The fallen peacekeepers came from many different troop-contributing countries, a poignant reminder of the global partnership that underpins United Nations peacekeeping.

Currently, 116 Member States contribute military and police personnel to our operations. This impressive number reflects growing global confidence in the value of United Nations peacekeeping as a tool for collective security. Our new observer mission in Syria is the latest example that demonstrates how the international community

looks to the United Nations for solutions to emerging challenges. The Mission is facing difficult challenges but serves bravely to help keep the parties, starting with the Government of Syria, to their commitments to cease the violence that has killed thousands of people. It is part of the larger UN efforts led by the Joint Special Envoy to end the violence and seek a political solution to the Syrian crisis.

The ultimate goal of any UN peacekeeping mission is to no longer be necessary. Until we reach that objective, we make every effort for peacekeeping to be as effective and efficient as possible.

I am deeply grateful for every contribution of troops and police, as well as for the financial and material resources that make peacekeeping possible. I also thank all countries that provide political support and leadership. Members of the Security Council, in particular, guide and strengthen our work by establishing mandates and updating our deployments to respond to changing conditions on the ground.

Regional organizations play an increasingly important role. The African Union and the United Nations, for example, are working closely together in Darfur and Somalia while jointly addressing the threat posed by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army.

These partnerships help give UN peacekeeping the flexibility it needs to address today's wide-ranging challenges to international peace and security.

On this International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, let us remember the sacrifice of those who have served, and let us pledge to strengthen the global partnerships that make our blue helmets a beacon of hope to millions of people around the world.