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PRESS RELEASE

UNIFIL observes International Day of Peace

Naqoura, Lebanon - The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) today held a ceremony at its headquarters in Naqoura to mark the 29th International Day of Peace. Present at the ceremony were local authorities, religious leaders, representatives of the Lebanese Armed Forces and the international community.

Force Commander Major-General Alberto Asarta Cuevas reviewed an honour guard from peacekeepers representing the 31 different national contingents that make up UNIFIL. He, together with Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) Major-General Abed Alrahman Shehaitli, representing the LAF Commander, laid wreaths at the UNIFIL cenotaph.

This year, Peace Day is dedicated to young people around the world under the theme “youth for peace and development”. Addressing the ceremony, the Force Commander emphasized the message of the UN Secretary-General: “Peace and development are closely interlinked. Peace enables development, which is critical in providing opportunities for young people.”

Major-General Asarta noted “the tremendous support, cooperation and good-will which the LAF has extended to UNIFIL”.

He reaffirmed UNIFIL’s commitment to its mission, “working shoulder-to-shoulder with the Lebanese Armed Forces and extending all the necessary support to the Lebanese Government and the people of southern Lebanon”.

During the ceremony, the Force Commander paid tribute to the UNIFIL peacekeepers who have given their lives while serving the cause of peace since 1978.

The International Day of Peace was established by the UN General Assembly in 1981 as a day dedicated to ceasefire and non-violence; a day where tolerance, justice and human rights are promoted. There are currently nearly 124,000 peacekeepers from over 160 countries serving around the world. Of these, 12,500 are serving with UNIFIL.

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