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PRESS RELEASE

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UN Headquarters Observes International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers on 25 May

UN Headquarters will observe the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers and mark the 75th anniversary of UN Peacekeeping on Thursday, 25 May.

In 1948, the historic decision was made to deploy military observers to the Middle East to supervise the implementation of Israel-Arab Armistice Agreements, in what became the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.

Since that time, more than two million peacekeepers from 125 countries have since served in 71 operations around the world. Today, 87,000 women and men are serving in 12 conflict zones across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

During formal ceremonies at United Nations Headquarters, Secretary-General, António Guterres, will lay a wreath to honour the more than 4,200 UN peacekeepers who have lost their lives since 1948. He will also preside over a ceremony in the General Assembly Hall at which Dag Hammarskjöld Medals will be awarded posthumously to 103 military, police, and civilian peacekeepers, who lost their lives serving under the UN flag last year.

The Secretary-General will also present the 2022 Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award to Captain Cecilia Erzuah, a military officer from Ghana who served with the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).

Created in 2016, the Award “recognizes the dedication and effort of an individual peacekeeper in promoting the principles of UN Security Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security”.

In his message, the Secretary-General said: “United Nations peacekeepers are the beating heart of our commitment to a more peaceful world. For 75 years, they have supported people and communities rocked by conflict and upheaval across the globe. Today, on the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, we honour their extraordinary contributions to international peace and security.”

The theme for this year’s observance, “Peace Begins with Me”, recognizes the contribution and efforts of UN peacekeepers alongside many partners including the communities that we serve to secure peace and progress.

Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, said: “Peacekeeping is a powerful example of how strong partnerships and collective political will can result in meaningful change. Working together with local communities and other partners, our personnel

protect civilians, advance political solutions, and help end conflicts in the pursuit of sustainable peace. We appreciate the support of all stakeholders to ensure that UN Peacekeeping can continue to work as an effective multilateral tool for global peace and security.”

The International Day of UN Peacekeepers was established by the UN General Assembly in 2002, to pay tribute to all men and women serving in peacekeeping, and to honour the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.

Schedule of Events at Headquarters on 25 May

09:40 a.m.: The Secretary-General will lay a wreath in honour of fallen peacekeepers at the Peacekeepers Memorial Site on the North Lawn. (If inclement weather, the ceremony will be held near the Chagall window in the Visitors’ Lobby). Only UN Photo and UN TV will cover the ceremony. It will not be webcast live, but will be available on demand soon after the event: <https://media.un.org/>

10:00 a.m.: The Dag Hammarskjöld Medal and Military Gender Advocate of the Year ceremonies will be held in the General Assembly Hall and shown live on UN Webcast: <https://media.un.org/>

12:00 p.m.: Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix will be the guest at the noon briefing. It will be webcast live at <https://media.un.org/>

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For more information, please visit the Peacekeepers Day websites here: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/peacekeepers-day>; or

<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/international-day-of-peacekeepers-2023>

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