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| **Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York** |

**United Nations Staff Union Mourns Fallen in ‘Annus Horribilis’ 2010**

**‘Biggest Single Loss of Life in History of UN Peacekeeping’**

The United Nations Staff Union and its Committee for the Security and Independence of the International Civil Service continue to mourn the many United Nations staff members who paid with their lives while serving the Organization in an “annus horribilis” epitomized by the earthquake that struck Haiti on 12 January 2010.

“The Staff Union again pays homage to the 102 United Nations personnel who died on 12 January 2010 in the Haiti earthquake — the biggest single loss of life in the history of United Nations peacekeeping,” said United Nations Staff Union President Stephen Kisambira.  “One year later, the pain from that loss has not diminished, and the Staff Union mourns together with the families and friends of the deceased even as we commiserate with the survivors whose lives have forever changed.”

The earthquake killed 59 civilian personnel and 43 members of the police and military contingents of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

In addition, at least seven civilian staff members, 10 peacekeepers and a number of civilian personnel working for United Nations implementing partners and contractors lost their lives as a result of acts of violence in 2010, according to the Staff Union Committee.  The seven deaths were due to terrorism (2), crime (4) and post-conflict environment (1).

“Once again, United Nations personnel were senselessly killed while working to assist populations in need,” Mr. Kisambira said.  “The Darfur region of the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Afghanistan were, again, among the most dangerous areas for United Nations personnel.  We appeal to the Governments concerned to do the utmost to guarantee the protection of United Nations staff and other related personnel.  The string of kidnappings in Darfur is particularly worrisome.”

Deadly attacks in 2010 claimed many lives, including that of Alexander Danso, a Ghanaian peacekeeper with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), as well as two United Nations sub-contractors, on 4 April in the north-west town of Mbandaka, Democratic Republic of the Congo.  During fighting between the Congolese Army and MONUC units against the Envele militia, Mr. Danso was hit by an explosive shrapnel shell in his vehicle while his team was heading for the airport.  A MONUC South African subcontracting pilot was shot and killed by the militiamen as they were being chased out of the airport.  A MONUC subcontractor, Dr. Jay Basilio-Bool, of the Philippines, died as a result of heart failure during the fighting.

Additionally, two Egyptian peacekeepers, Mahmoud Reda Mohamed Gad and Ahmed Soliman Mohamed Soliman, serving with the joint African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) were killed on 7 May in an ambush near the village of Katila, about 85 kilometres south of the town of Edd al Fursan, South Darfur state.  Their three-vehicle convoy, carrying out a routine patrol, was attacked by about 20 unidentified armed gunmen who open fire without warning.

Naik Husan Lal, an Indian peacekeeper serving with MONUC, died on 23 May as a consequence of wounds suffered in an exchange of fire when his patrol went to the aid of Congolese Army forces caught in an ambush by unidentified gunmen near the Mabenga bridge, 20 kilometres away from Kiwanja, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Three UNAMID Blue Helmets from Rwanda, Valens Musabyimana, Kabango Sadiki and Joseph Ntawumenyumunsi, were killed on 21 June in an ambush when more than 20 assailants opened fire without warning on Rwandan peacekeepers guarding civilian engineers working near the West Darfur village of Nertiti.  The peacekeepers returned fire and an hour-long firefight ensued.  The attack brought to 25 the number of UNAMID peacekeepers murdered in Darfur since the mission began in January 2008.

One civilian national staff member of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was shot and killed on 29 June at a busy traffic circle in Kabul while riding a UNAMA vehicle.

Three Indian Blue Helmets, Havildar Omkar Singh, Najik Suraj Bhagwan Budania and Sepoy Parvinder Singh, were killed on 18 August in the overnight ambush of a United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) base in Kirumba, North Kivu province.  The base was attacked shortly before 2 a.m. by up to 60 men armed with machetes and spears.  Although the peacekeepers engaged with the attackers, forcing them to retreat, seven Indian soldiers were also injured in the attack.

Bejunson Basnillo, a Filipino driver working for the World Food Programme (WFP), was shot and killed on 27 November in the township of Marantao, Lanao del Sur, southern Philippines, while on his way to deliver some 488 bags of rice to conflict-affected people, in an area where many armed groups operate.

Kidnappings of United Nations personnel also continued.  In particular, a UNAMID assessment patrol was ambushed, seized and taken to an unknown location on 5 March by armed men while on its way to Jebel Marra, South Darfur, the scene of clashes.  Two peacekeepers were able to evade capture and escape, trekking over long distances at night in the desert.  They were helped by locals to find their way to a place from which they could contact UNAMID.  The other peacekeepers were released on 6 March.

Four unarmed South African police advisers — two men and two women — serving with UNAMID were abducted on 11 April near Nyala, the capital of South Darfur.  The four — Ntlogeleng Aucone, Michael Annett, Michael Melanzi and Macey Ramantsi — were released on 26 April, following the intervention of the Khartoum Government with the local authorities in southern Darfur.

Yevgeny Mostovshchikov, a Russian UNAMID helicopter pilot, was abducted on 26 July after his helicopter landed in Aborjo, South Darfur state, where it was met by a hostile group that attacked and robbed several people aboard the helicopter.  The passengers and crew were returned to Nyala on 27 July.  The pilot was released on 29 July.

Two Jordanian UNAMID police advisers, Ahmed Qeisi and Nabil Kilani, were seized on 14 August by armed men while walking to a transport dispatch point 100 metres from their residence in Nyala.  They were released on 17 August in the city of Kass, following meetings on 16 August of UNAMID officials and a Government-UNAMID task force set up to resolve the issue.

István Papp, a Hungarian UNAMID civilian staff member, was abducted on 7 October along with two other peacekeepers from their residence in El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, by gunmen who left in a UNAMID vehicle.  The other two staff members managed to escape from the moving vehicle.  Mr. Papp was released on 5 January 2011.

Captain Artjoms Nalbandjans, co-pilot Janis Gindra and mechanic Kaspars Reihlers, three Latvians working as helicopter crew for the WFP United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, were seized on 4 November by gunmen in Nyala.  WFP worked closely with the Sudanese Government for the release of the three, who were freed on 8 December.

In 2009, 31 United Nations civilian personnel lost their lives as a result of acts of violence, according to the latest report of the Secretary-General on the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel (document A/65/344).  The deaths were due to terrorism (16), crime (6) and armed conflict (9).  In the same year, 110 were injured as a result of acts of violence, 22 were abducted and 163 arrested and detained.

In the same year, seven peacekeepers were killed, according to the Staff Union Committee — six of them in Darfur.