

The first to lose their lives serving the United Nations in the cause of peace

Count Folke Bernadotte

Count Folke Bernadotte headed the Swedish Red Cross during World War II. In 1948, he became the UN's first mediator in Palestine. Shortly before his plan for a political solution to the Palestine question was to be presented to the UN, he was assassinated in Jerusalem. In 1998, his family received the Dag Hammarskjöld medal.

Commandant René de Labarrière

The French officer, Commandant René de Labarrière, was the first peacekeeper to lose his life in a UN peace-keeping operation. Serving as a Military Observer in the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation in Palestine, he was killed by a landmine on 6 July 1948. In 1998, his family received his Dag Hammarskjöld medal.

The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas



The Band was raised in 1859 as part of an Indian Army Gurkha Regiment called the Sirmoor Rifle Regiment. It had 16 Bandsmen and one Naik (a leader). In the early days, it travelled through India and to Malta, Cyprus and Afghanistan. When India was partitioned in 1947, Gurkha regiments chose their new affiliations to either Britain or India. The 2nd Goorkhas, as the Regiment was now called, chose Britain. By 1958 there were two flourishing Gurkha bands which were later amalgamated with Hong Kong and the United Kingdom providing dual bases. Following the withdrawal from Hong Kong in 1994, the Band moved back to the United Kingdom permanently. It has travelled to Australia, Brunei, Canada, South Korea, Malaya, France, Korea, Germany, Cyprus and Belgium. Its musicians are trained at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall in London. The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas is based at Shorncliffe near Folkestone.



Nepalese Peacekeepers arrive in Juba from Haiti

4 February 2014. Over two hundred Nepalese peacekeepers arrive in Juba from the UN Stabilisation Mission in Haiti to reinforce the military component of the UN Mission in South Sudan. The contingent's arrival follows an advance team of 25 Nepalese troops who arrived in the country in January after an outbreak of violence in mid-December between pro- and anti-government forces. The UN Mission in South Sudan currently comprises 7,558 troops, 156 military liaison officers, 1,033 police and 864 international civilians. They are working with 1,334 local civilian staff and 406 United Nations Volunteers.

The United Nations Association



UNA-UK is the UK's leading independent authority on the UN (www.una.org.uk). Independent of the UN system, it can be critical of its decisions and activities if needed and can call for reforms to better equip it to fulfil its fundamental functions; to maintain international peace and security, to promote development and to uphold human rights around the world. UNA-UK has recently called for human rights to be at the heart of any successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), concerned that some States have argued that development is not a human rights issue. It has recently published Mainstreaming the Responsibility to Protect in UK strategy which examines how the UK Government can stand by its commitment to implement the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

For information on previous ceremonies, visit www.unawestminster.org.uk



International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers



Remembrance Ceremony

The Cenotaph, Whitehall
1.00pm, 22 May 2014

International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers

Remembrance Ceremony

The wreath-laying party will march from the Royal United Services Institute led by the Colour Guard of the United Nations Veterans Association

Statement: David Wardrop, Chairman, United Nations Association Westminster Branch

We gather here to mark the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers. To pay tribute to men and women from countries across the world who serve selflessly and, sometimes, unrewardingly in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Let us remember those who have laid down their lives in lands far from their own in the service of peace. They came from one hundred and twenty countries. They are mourned in one hundred and ninety four. They chose to serve their country. Their country chose them to serve the world, to serve us. They died in a country with which their own had no dispute. Each is mourned by a mother, a father, a widow, by family, by friends. And we are here because we mourn them too.

We look forward to the day when we in this country have a memorial to them as do other nations; a memorial that recognises the sacrifice of all peacekeepers from wherever they came. For when each of these died, we might have lost one of our own. In this window of calm in Whitehall, close to where the General Assembly of the United Nations first met in 1946, we reflect on the challenges we set ourselves then.....and the tasks that remain unfinished. Today, here, we comprise the largest gathering worldwide of diplomats, visitors from many countries, and of people from this country marking this International Day.

We encourage all nations to hold such gatherings, remembering not only their own sons and daughters but also those of other nations, serving all humankind. When together we can do this and mark this day together, it will be then that we may truly call ourselves the United Nations.

Prayer: The Right Reverend Richard Moth, *Catholic Bishop of the Forces*

The Last Post is called and the United Nations flag is lowered. After a short silence, the Reveille is called.

Wreaths

In memory of Count Folke Bernadotte, UN mediator in Palestine, assassinated 1948

Oscar Bernadotte, *Grandson*

In memory of UK servicemen and women

John Cooke, *UN Veterans Association (UK)*

In memory of Commandant Rene de Labarriere, the first UN fatality

Colonel Alain Bayle, *Army Attaché, French Embassy*

In memory of those from 120 nations who have lost their lives in the cause of peace

Paul Arkwright, *Multilateral Policy Director, Foreign and Commonwealth Office*

Rear-Admiral John Gower CB OBE, *Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (NUC-CB)*

Peter Spindler, *Assistant Inspector of Constabulary, HMIC*

and members of the Diplomatic Corps

Representing

The widows of UN Peacekeepers

Debbie Bowles, *Treasurer, War Widows Association*

UK Civilian Staff

David Irwin, *HM Revenue and Customs*

BAFUNCS

David Mitchels, *Ethics Officer, United Nations Office for Project Services*

The United Nations Association

Natalie Samarasinghe, *Executive Director*

The Youth of the World

Pupils from Grey Coat Hospital School for Girls and Westminster

City School for Boys

Closing Prayer: Sayed Ali Abbas Razawi, *Joint Secretary, Majlis-e-Ulama Europe*

Closing statement: David Wardrop

Now we return to our homes and to our loved ones, to our work and our colleagues. As we remember those who set out to keep the peace, let us remember also those they have set out to protect; those who yearn for those three fundamental freedoms - the freedom from want, the freedom from fear and the freedom to live in dignity. And that one day, in lasting peace and in that larger freedom, they also may say as we here can say 'We too are the peoples, the peoples of the United Nations'.

The Colour Guard will lead the procession back to the Royal United Services Institute.

Students from the Grey Coat Hospital School for Girls and the Westminster City School for Boys will serve as marshals throughout the ceremony.

United Nations peacekeepers: Keeping the peace, protecting the people

Today, there are nearly 98,000 uniformed UN peacekeeping troops from 122 countries including 12,000 police, serving in 15 UN operations on four continents. About 3,700 women peacekeepers serve in the military and police. These are joined by 5,200 international civilians and more than 13,000 local civilian staff. The UN is the largest multilateral contributor to post-conflict stabilisation worldwide. Only the US deploys more military personnel to the field. Approved resources for the year ending 30 June 2011 totalled about £5 billion. In 2005, UN peacekeeping operations involved 161,000 military and police personnel using 864 flights on 200 long-term charter aircraft, moving in all 700,000 passengers to various missions. In that year, the UN deployed 220 medical clinics and 21 military hospitals.



Following an ambush, Nigerian peacekeepers in Darfur learn of the death of four colleagues and injury to eight others. October 2012



Uruguayan peacekeepers in the DRC land near Uvira, South Kivu, to protect commercial navigation against piracy. October 2012

International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers

A total of 3,215 peacekeepers from 123 nations have lost their lives in service. Of these, 103 were British. The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers was first observed on 29 May 2003, the date in 1948 when the first UN peacekeeping mission, its Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), began operations in Palestine. On this day, we pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in UN peacekeeping operations, as well as to honour the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace. We remember them together today as, unlike those who died for their country in battle, each might have been from one's own country.

Women Make Excellent Peacekeepers

From 1% in 1993 to today's 4% of military personnel and 10% of police, women serve in all areas of peacekeeping, making a positive impact on peacekeeping environments, supporting the role of women in building peace and protecting women's rights. They can perform the same roles, to the same standards and under the same difficult conditions, as their male counterparts. It is an operational imperative that the UN recruits and retains female peacekeepers. They act as role models in the local environment, inspiring women and girls in often male-dominated societies to push for their own rights and for participation in peace processes. Five women lead UN peace operations and there are three all-female UN police units deployed, Indian in Liberia, Bangladeshi in Haiti and Samoan in Timor.



Policewomen march at the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur commemorating the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers. May 2011

New Medal to Honour 'Exceptional Courage' of UN Personnel

8 May 2014 The UN Security Council agreed to create "the Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal for Exceptional Courage" in honour of a UN peacekeeper credited with saving hundreds of Rwandans from death during the 1994 genocide. It will be awarded to peacekeepers "who demonstrate exceptional courage, in the face of extreme danger, while fulfilling the mandate of their missions or their functions, in the service of humanity and the United Nations." Captain Mbaye Diagne of Senegal served with the former UN Mission in Rwanda. The Security Council recognized "with the deepest regret" how the family of Captain Diagne never received, after his death, any expressions of appreciation from UN Headquarters for the sacrifices made by their distinguished family member. A design of the medal will be submitted within six months. Exactly how recipients shall be nominated has yet to be decided.

The Dag Hammarskjöld Medal

The Medal is a posthumous award to members of UN peace-keeping operations who have lost their lives in service under the control and authority of the UN. The 3" x 2", clear glass crystal ellipsoid is grit-blasted with the name and date of death of the recipient, the UN symbol and the inscription "The Dag Hammarskjöld Medal. In Service of Peace" in English and French. Dag Hammarskjöld, UN Secretary-General (1953-1961) died in a plane crash while on a peace mission in the Congo fifty years ago. In September 2013, the Hammarskjöld Commission, a voluntary body of international jurists, concluded that credible new evidence could justify the UN reopening its enquiry into the cause of Hammarskjöld's death (GA Resolution 1759 (XVII), 26 October 1962) In March 2014, the UN Secretary-General invited the UN General Assembly to consider appointing an independent panel of experts to take the Report's findings forward See www.hammar skjoldcommission.org