



# United Nations Mission in South Sudan

## Press Release

29 May 2019

Remarks on the International Day of UN Peacekeepers  
by  
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Honourable Minister;  
Excellencies;  
Members of the diplomatic community;  
Dear UN colleagues;

My fellow peacekeepers,

Thank you for sharing this special day with us.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all on this 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of United Nations Peacekeeping.

Over the past seven decades, more than 1 million men and women have served under the UN flag in at least 70 UN peacekeeping operations. More than 100,000 military, police and civilian personnel from 125 countries currently serve in 14 peace operations.

They are deployed in some of the most difficult operating environments and are expected to undertake ever-more ambitious tasks in complex emergency situations.

Over the years, UN Peacekeeping has adapted to meet the demands of different conflicts and changing political landscape.

Today's multidimensional peace operations are called upon, not only to maintain peace and security, but also to facilitate political processes, support elections, protect and promote human rights and restore the rule of law.

While most peacekeepers are serving in the military or police, 14 percent are civilians. They perform a wide range of functions, from serving in the mission's strategic leadership to working in political and civil affairs, human rights, child protection, rule of law, logistics and more.

Women peacekeepers today play an increasingly prominent role and are crucial towards improving the performance of our missions. Having more women peacekeepers deployed in police, military and civilian components has made an impact on peacekeeping environments, both in supporting the role of women in building peace and protecting women and girls' rights.

After 71 years, UN Peacekeeping continues to be as relevant as ever. It remains one of the most effective tools to respond to some of the most difficult global peace and security challenges.



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As the UN Secretary-General said at the peacekeeper's day ceremony in New York: "For millions in conflict-affected situations around the world, peacekeeping is a necessity and a hope. Let us work together to make peacekeeping more effective in protecting people and advancing peace."

With that message in mind, we must remember that ultimately, success of peacekeeping in any context is dependent on a conducive environment for an inclusive, people-centred and sustainable peace process and the real prospect for sustainable peace and security for all.

This is very much part of our role in South Sudan.

Our mandate is focused on two key tasks: protecting civilians and building durable peace.

Today, UNMISS has almost 15,000 military, more than 1800 police and corrections officers and 2,800 civilian staff working towards these goals.

We protect civilians in many ways. Our military provide active patrolling to deter violence so displaced families can have the confidence to voluntarily return to their homes and to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian aid.

Our police officers ensure the safety and security of approximately 178,000 civilians in our Protection of Civilians sites.

Our civilian staff work tirelessly to promote peace through dialogue, advocacy for the respect for human rights and the rule of law and assisting communities with the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

UNMISS is also facilitating dialogue and rapprochement in communities across the country to support the implementation of the revitalized peace agreement.

We are also bringing political leaders together in workshops and forums to build trust and confidence and providing expertise to support the various mechanisms of the revitalized peace agreement in implementing their mandated tasks.

Our work carries significant risks. All our personnel place themselves in harms' way to help others.

Sadly, some of our colleagues have paid the ultimate price in the line of duty. Across the world, 3,842 have fallen. The families of peacekeepers in their home countries share that sacrifice. We mourn the loss of the 67 UNMISS staff who have fallen since 2011 and pay particular tribute to the 12 personnel who lost their lives in the past year.

I wish to express my immense gratitude to all our peacekeepers for your professionalism, enduring commitment and sacrifice in the service of the people of South Sudan.

With the signing of the revitalized agreement on the resolution of the conflict in South Sudan in September 2018, it is my profound hope that 2019 will be the year that lasting peace is achieved.

On that journey, as peacekeepers and peacebuilders, UNMISS stands in partnership with the people of South Sudan as we work together towards a peaceful and prosperous future for all.

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