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PRESS RELEASE

UNIFIL Peacekeepers Commemorate International Day of UN Peacekeepers

Naqoura, Lebanon – Peacekeepers serving with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) today marked the International Day of UN Peacekeepers in a wreath-laying ceremony held at UNIFIL Headquarters.

Peacekeepers representing the 30 different national contingents that make up UNIFIL attended the ceremony, which saw the UNIFIL Acting Force Commander, Brigadier-General J.P. Nehra, and a representative of the Lebanese Army each lay wreaths at the UNIFIL cenotaph.

Also in attendance were officials from local government and community groups, as well as diplomatic representatives from various countries which have contributed troops to UNIFIL.

More than 100 peacekeeping personnel lost their lives – whether through attacks, illnesses or accidents – in 2006 in the service of peace. In the 29 years that UNIFIL has been in existence, there have been 253 fatalities of peacekeepers serving with UNIFIL – three of these occurred in the first five months of 2007.

International Day of UN Peacekeepers was established in 2002 by a General Assembly resolution designating 29 May – the date in 1948 when the first UN peacekeeping mission began operations – to pay tribute to all men and women who have served and continue to serve in UN peacekeeping operations for their high level of professionalism, dedication and courage, and to honour the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.

There are currently more than 100,000 peacekeepers from 115 countries serving in 18 operations. Of these, more than 13,000 are serving with UNIFIL.

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