

UN Chief Honors Fallen Peacekeepers at New York Ceremony



Published on June 5, 2026

Document Date: Tue, Jun 09 2026 08:47:13 pm

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres laid a wreath at the Peacekeepers Memorial Site on the North Lawn of UN Headquarters on Friday, honoring thousands of peacekeepers who have died serving under the UN flag over seven decades.

He said nearly 4,500 personnel have lost their lives since UN peacekeeping began almost 80 years ago.

“Peacekeepers continue to face peril in the cause of peace, and we pay the highest tribute to their service and sacrifice,” Guterres said.

The ceremony followed the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, recognizing global service.

Guterres said UN peacekeeping remains one of the most effective international responses to conflict.

“Across the globe, the UN Blue Helmet is a symbol of hope in their darkest hour,” he said.

More than 50,000 peacekeepers serve in missions, protecting civilians, reducing violence, supporting political processes, assisting elections, and enabling humanitarian aid delivery.

Guterres called them “protectors of the vulnerable” and “guardians of hope,” expressing gratitude to those serving.

UN Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix also paid tribute to fallen peacekeepers and stressed risks they face in the field.

“Attacks against peacekeepers are unacceptable,” he said, adding that peacekeeping “is worth the investment.”

He noted the annual peacekeeping budget is \$5.38 billion, comparing it to the cost of organizing the FIFA World Cup to highlight global spending priorities.

Lacroix urged stronger political and financial support from member states to sustain peace operations.