



UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SUDAN

Press Release No. 9/08

Khartoum, 28 May 2008: The sixth International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers will be marked on 29 May at UN Headquarters in New York, as well as at UNMIS offices in Sudan and other peacekeeping missions around the world.

This year, the annual International Day of UN Peacekeepers also marks the sixtieth anniversary of UN peacekeeping. Six decades ago, the Security Council established the first UN peacekeeping mission. Most of the peacekeepers came from a handful of European and American countries and were mainly unarmed military men observing and monitoring cease-fire lines.

Since then, peacekeeping has developed into a major UN activity. Today, the UN has more than 110,000 men and women deployed in conflict zones around the world. They come from nearly 120 countries -- an all-time high, reflecting confidence in peacekeeping.

In Sudan, UNMIS will celebrate the event at its headquarters in Khartoum, as well as in Juba, Malakal, Kadugli, Wau and Ed Damazin.

The events in Sudan will include formal flag-raising ceremonies, and the reading of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's message in both Arabic and English. A one-minute period of silence will be observed to pay tribute to all those who have died in the service of UN peacekeeping since 29 May 1948, when the first UN Peacekeeping Operation - UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) - began in Palestine.

In addition, military peacekeepers serving in different locations throughout Sudan will conduct parades and hold free medical or veterinary clinics to benefit local populations. Peacekeepers in each location are also planning to hold friendly sports events, with the participation of local communities.

There are currently 9,278 military peacekeepers and 657 police officers serving at UNMIS. In addition, more than 2,460 Sudanese and 950 international civilians including 208 UN Volunteers from 109 countries are also employed in the mission. The figures do not cover the joint UN-AU peace keeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

For further information on International UN Peacekeepers Day in Sudan contact:

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