

## 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 peacekeeping 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 ROYAL ARTILLERY BAND



The British Army introduced artillery in 1346 at the Battle of Crecy but it was only in 1716 that a permanent body of artillery was created. The Royal Artillery band was formed in 1762 and until 1984 included a mounted band, at one time the largest such ever seen. Today, the 49-strong band is one of eight London-based State Bands. It supports all State ceremonial duties including the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle and all Royal and State Visit Gun Salutes with the King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery, in Hyde Park and Green Park. Its musicians are competent on both string and wind instruments and the Royal Artillery Band is as such the only British Army band able to perform independently as both a wind band or concert orchestra, making it the oldest established orchestra in Great Britain. The Band has toured Eastern Europe, France, Germany, Algeria, China and Switzerland. Its rock group Voice of the

Guns has performed in Basra, bringing morale-boosting music to troops on operations. When not employed on ceremonial duties, it retains strong links with its parent regiment, performing for the Royal Artillery at its Headquarters in Larkhill and for its many regiments around the world.



## UN Humanitarian Affairs chief briefs on visit to Afghanistan

Baroness Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, briefs the press on 15 May on her mission to Afghanistan. Baroness Amos gave the Folke Bernadotte Memorial lecture titled 'Soldier, Peacekeeper and Aid Giver; can one hat fit all?' at this morning's conference at the Royal United Services Institute, Whitehall.

## The United Nations Association

UNA-UK is the UK's leading independent authority on the UN ([www.una.org.uk](http://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 is working with government and NGOs to promote the Olympic Truce following all 193 UN Member States supporting the Resolution entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" on 17 October at the UN in New York. Today's International Peacekeepers Day conference and remembrance ceremony will be the ninth organised by its Westminster Branch.

For information on previous ceremonies, visit [www.unawestminster.org.uk](http://www.unawestminster.org.uk)



## International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers



## Remembrance Ceremony

*The Women of World War II Memorial*  
12.30pm, 29 May 2012

# 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:** The Rt. Hon. Baroness Boothroyd, OM

We gather to pay tribute to the 100,000 men and women who wear the blue berets and blue helmets of United Nations Peacekeepers and those who served before them. On this International day of Peacekeepers, we honour their professionalism, dedication, courage, and the memory of those who lost their lives in the cause of peace.

We remember the nearly 3,000 Peacekeepers who died in 67 peace-keeping missions since they were first deployed in 1946. The dangers are still acute, as we saw in central Africa a few weeks ago when eleven Peacekeepers were seriously wounded.

Today we meet at the Memorial to the Women of World War Two. The monument is dedicated to all the women who served our country and the cause of freedom in uniform and on the home front. It is not by nature a purely military memorial. It depicts the uniforms of women in the forces alongside the working clothes of those who worked in the factories, hospitals, the emergency services and the farms. When the war ended most women hung up their uniforms, which the memorial depicts, and went home. That has never been an option for the Peacekeepers. They cannot hang up their berets and helmets as long as conflict and the danger of escalation remain a global challenge.

The men and women UN Peacekeepers are currently deployed in 17 countries across four continents. They come from 117 countries, large and small, rich and poor. By their deeds and example, they give their lives to those who foolishly regard the United Nations as nothing more than a talking shop.

We thank them and their governments represented here today for their enormous contribution to the cause of peace. They are not engaged in the pursuit of military victory. Theirs is the search for a lasting settlement of disputes and permanent end to bloodshed and suffering in countries torn in conflict.

**Prayer:** Revd. Lucy Winkett, *St. James's Church, Piccadilly*

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**

*Astrid Bernadotte, Granddaughter*

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

*Rear Admiral Henri Schricke, Defence Attache, Embassy of France*

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

*Vijay Rangarajan, Multilateral Policy Director, Foreign & Commonwealth Office*

*Air Vice-Marshal Paul Colley OBE RAF, Director Concepts & Doctrine, Joint Forces Command*

*Sir Denis O'Connor CBE QPM, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary*

## Representing

**The widows of UN Peacekeepers**

*Rosalind Dillon Lee, War Widows Association*

**UK servicemen and women**

*John Cooke, UN Veterans Association (UK)*

**Soldiers of Peace International Association**

*Oleg Polakovs, Director for External Relations*

**UK Civilian Staff**

*David Irwin, HM Revenue and Customs*

**The United Nations Association**

*Natalie Samarasinghe, United Nations Association*

**The Youth of the World**

*Pupils from Grey Coat Hospital School for Girls and Westminster City School for Boys*

**Closing statement:** The Rt. Hon. Baroness Boothroyd, OM

Here is the heart of London where the General Assembly of the United Nations first met in 1946, we re-commit ourselves to the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the United Nations Charter. The struggle for peace and justice goes on. We send out thanks and best wishes to the UN Peacekeepers who serve that cause in all our names.

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 100,000 uniformed UN peacekeeping troops from 117 nations including 14,700 police, serving in 16 UN operations on four continents. About 3500 women peacekeepers serve in the military and police. These are joined by 5,700 international civilians and more than 13,000 local civilian staff. The UN is the largest multilateral contributor to post-conflict stabilization 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.



UN Observer in Homs, Syria speaks to citizens of Homs as his team patrol the city. April 2012



UN flag flies at half-mast in Kabul in honour of seven UN staff members killed in an attack on in Mazar-i-Sharif. April 2011

## International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers

A total of 2,994 peacekeepers from 120 nations have lost their lives in service. Of these, 102 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. Three 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



Bangladesh all female police unit arrives in Haiti 2010

## The Dag Hammarskjöld Medal

The Medal is a posthumous award to members of UN peacekeeping 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, the United Nations Association, together with the University of London and the Hammarskjöld Foundation, will organize a conference in his memory titled *Dag Hammarskjöld, Africa and the End of Empire*.