



UN Newsletter

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International Day of UN peacekeepers commemorated at UN complex in Nairobi

The United Nations System in Kenya commemorated the International Day of UN Peacekeepers in a ceremony in the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) on 27 May 2010.

In attendance was a cross section of 300 guests from the Kenyan Government and the defence forces, the diplomatic corps, non-governmental organisations, educational institutions, and the staff of UN agencies in Kenya.

The Officer-in-Charge of UNON and Resident Coordinator of the UN System in Kenya, Mr Aeneas Chuma, delivered the UN Secretary-General's message for the Day.

In the message, Secretary-General



Kenya Army representative with his wreath at the ceremony.

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Ban Ki-moon called upon all nations to pay tribute to the men and women who had lost their lives while serving with distinction in UN operations around the world.

Major General Maurice Otieno Oyugi, a representative of the Kenya Department of Defence, noted: "When the need arises, everyone has an obligation to be each other's keeper." He made reference to the fact that Kenya had lost 17 soldiers in the line of peacekeeping duty. He stressed that the death of these peacekeepers was not in vain. He summed up his remarks by saying, "The fallen peacekeepers are the

heroes of our operations."

Following the speeches, the guests observed two minutes of silence and four wreaths were laid in honor of all the fallen UN peacekeepers.

The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers was established by the UN General Assembly in 2002 to pay tribute to all men and women serving in UN peacekeeping operations for their level of professionalism, dedication and courage. The Day is also to honor the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.

UNHCR revives community-based rehabilitation for disabled persons



Melki Makonnen, Chairman of Persons with Disability in Kakuma camp holds one of the crutches produced at the Orthopaedic Workshop.

In April 2010, the Orthopaedic Workshop for disabled persons in the Kakuma refugee camp was re-opened after a four-year lull since 2006. Following the re-opening of the workshop, an assessment was conducted by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), and the report carrying the results of the assessment was released in Kakuma on 20 May 2010. The IRC is a partner of the United Nations High Commissioner

for Refugee (UNHCR) in health issues.

According to the report, 68% of those assessed were persons aged 18 years or above, 16% were aged between 5-12 years, 10% between 13-18 years, while 6% were below 5 years of age. Of these, 555 were physically disabled persons, 503 with visual impairment, 303 with hearing impairment, and 66 with mental retardation. Nine were albinos, and 848 persons suffered from various disabilities.

Melki Makonnen, an Ethiopian refugee and chairman of Persons with Disability says, “My desire is to see services that benefit disabled persons restored and the camp having tangible projects that will make them resourceful in society.”

However, only six persons out of 68 in need of wheel chairs have benefited, and ten refugees out of 32 in need will have tricycles once branding is completed. The 104 persons in need of crutches will have to wait as materials for production are being sought.

Abdullahi Isak, a Somali refugee who has benefited from the workshop explained to a UNHCR official: “I am able to perform my duties as a community leader, and I can highlight the needs of disabled persons.”

The Orthopaedic Workshop that is funded by UNHCR and run by IRC will be renovated to provide space not only for repair of tricycles and production of crutches, but also to empower more disabled persons as an Income Generating Centre. A self-help group called Syndicate Disabled Group registered in October 2009 enables disabled persons to be self-reliant.

UNIDO's off-grid solutions for lighting up Kenya

The World Bank and the International Financial Corporation (IFC) hosted a landmark Conference on Lighting Africa in Nairobi from 18 through 20 May 2010 as part of an effort to bridge the energy gap in sub-

Saharan Africa through off-grid lighting solutions. More than 600 participants and 50 exhibitors attended this second Lighting Africa conference and trade fair, which displayed off-grid lighting products targeting low-income

consumers.

In the exhibition of the conference, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) presented LED (Light Emitting Diode) lamp

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solutions that offer a sustainable alternative to kerosene lamp use. It was noted, however, that most of the products under exhibition were made outside of Africa, while the platform had been established for Africa to become a big consumer of the LED products with little or no local production from the African continent.

An exception to this in the exhibition was some Kenyan entrepreneurs who had been trained by UNIDO to assemble LED lamps under UNIDO's Lighting-up Kenya programme and the Dream Power-UNIDO partnership for local lighting products.

The Lighting Africa initiative was created to mobilise the global lighting industry to help entrepreneurs develop off-grid, non-fuel based lighting solutions for the millions of Africans who lack access to reliable light.

UNIDO's Lighting-up Kenya programme links to this initiative by promoting the local production of the non-fuel-based lighting solutions. The programme is based

on the perspective that the development of local products is the basis for the establishment of local industry. It also takes the view that local products are more responsive to market needs. Without promoting local products, Kenyan entrepreneurs cannot cope with inevitable challenges associated with the industry, and they are unable to innovate themselves and compete with new markets.

The aim of this UNIDO programme is to develop a community of engineers, designers, financiers and other participants who will establish the specifications for lamps used in Kenya that are locally produced. Through the success in this initiative, the Kenyan lamp industry is expected to expand the



LED lamp provided by UNIDO.

availability of locally-produced LED lamps in the market, which will lead to job creation. Furthermore, the replacement of Kerosene lamps with LED lamps will be environment- and health-friendly.

UN hosts Second Strategic Partners Consultative Forum on Rehabilitation of Mau Forest Ecosystem

The Second Consultative Forum on the Rehabilitation of the Mau Forest Ecosystem was held in the United Nations Complex Gigiri on 5 May 2010. The purpose of this meeting was to provide an update on the progress made by the Government and on the

support received from strategic partners towards rehabilitating the Mau Forest complex. The first consultative dialogue took place in Nairobi at the UNEP Headquarters in Gigiri on 9 September 2009.

At the opening session, UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said: "I would like to commend

the Kenyan Government for the sensitive way it is handling the complex issue of resettlement and the involvement of forest dependent people in the process." He added, "I would also like to commend donors for having risen to the request for assistance."

In his key note address, the Prime

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Minister of Kenya, Rt Hon Raila Odinga, said, “As we move forward to rehabilitate the Mau Forest, we are conscious of the fact that we have a duty to be sensitive to the human and social needs of those who must leave the forest. So far, illegal activities have been reduced by an estimated 60 - 70 per cent in southern Mau.”

Mr Hassan Noor Hassan, Head of the Interim Coordinating Secretariat, announced plans to conserve the complex through institutional arrangements, relocation and resettlement, restoration, management and rehabilitation and livelihoods, and creation of employment.

Forestry and Wildlife Minister Hon Noah Wekesa, who was also in attendance, said the government should not compensate people who used impunity to get into Mau.

Hon John Michuki, Minister for Environment and Mineral



The Head of the Interim Mau Co-ordinating Secretariat , Mr Noor Hassan Noor, presenting his remarks on the occasion.

Resources, said that the strategic partners needed to appeal to the people with good will to assist in restoring the forest that had become a part of global environmental challenge. He urged donors to look into possibilities of taking up sections of the Mau for restoration

and rehabilitation. “We hope donors can adopt a section of Mau,” he reiterated.

“We are impressed with the genuine Government effort to restore the Mau. We will support the project to its conclusion,” Achim Steiner stressed.
