Fallen Kenyan MONUSCO staffer honoured at UNON on UN Peacekeepers Day

THE United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Nairobi, in collaboration with the Kenya National Defence Forces, National Police and Prison Services commemorated the International Day of UN Peacekeepers on 29 May 2014.

The event was presided over by the Director-General of the UN Office at Nairobi (UNON), Sahle-Work Zewde, who paid tribute to the professionalism, dedication and courage of all men and women serving in UN Peacekeeping operations and honoured the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.

The Director-General also presented the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal posthumously to Michael Njoroge Muchiri, a Regional Security Advisor with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). Mr Muchiri died on 4 April 2011 aboard a UN plane that crashed while returning from a mission in Kisangani. Mrs Esther Gachagua Muchiri, his wife, received the medal on behalf of the family.

“This Day is also an opportunity to thank the governments who provide resources for United Nations Peacekeeping. Allow me to once again thank Kenya for its substantial contributions to UN Peacekeeping missions over the years,” Madame Zewde told UN staff and guests, including Kenyan

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Upcoming Events:

- 7 July - Launch of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Report 2014, Nairobi
- 11 July - World Population Day
- 18 July - Nelson Mandela International Day
Government officials and members of the diplomatic community.

Some 900 Kenyan military and police personnel serve in Peacekeeping Missions in Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Darfur, Lebanon, Liberia and South Sudan. Kenyan troops also serve in the African Union Mission in Somalia.

“I also take this opportunity to thank the other Troop-Contributing Countries that are represented here today”, she added.

On behalf of the Kenyan Government, the Cabinet Secretary of Foreign Affairs represented by Ambassador Muburi Muita noted how the United Nations has worked tirelessly to foster peace around the world for over 60 years to provide basic security guarantees to the most vulnerable in the society.

She applauded the United Nations for the establishment of the Captain Mbaye Diagne medal to appreciate and recognize the sacrifice of UN Peacekeepers.

UNIC mounted an exhibition in the UN lobby on contributions by Kenyan UN Peacekeepers and also ran a documentary on Peacekeeping operations.

**Kenya’s steady fight against polio commendable**

Eleven months after the last polio case was identified in Kenya, the country has kept a steady and determined effort to control the spread of the disease.

So far, the Ministry of Health in collaboration with partners has initiated thirteen rounds of vaccination campaigns nationally and in some specific more high risk districts. The campaigns have involved health teams sensitizing families and vaccinating children under-five years through house-to-house campaigns across the country. The teams also monitor routine immunization and surveillance. These are supported by teams of public health consultants and STOP (stop transmission of polio) which have been deployed by the global polio
IOM organizes training workshop on Sexual Offences Act and Counter-Trafficking Act

Twenty enforcement officers drawn from four Counties in Northern Kenya participated in a four-day training event organized by the IOM on the Sexual Offences Act and Counter-Trafficking Act.

The training held from 26-29 May in Naivasha County brought together prosecutors, police, children and gender officers from Turkana, Marsabit, Garissa and Uasin Gishu Counties.

Over the decades, Kenya has been facing social protection challenges during displacements caused by natural disasters and inter-communal conflict.

Girls and women who normally constitute the majority of the displaced populations are at high risk of Sexual Gender-Based Violence, exploitative practices such as human trafficking and harmful cultural practises such as Female Genital Mutilation, early or forced marriages, rape and domestic violence.

All these factors push girls, boys and women out of their families and communities, leaving them vulnerable to various forms of
exploitation. Despite these challenges the framework on legal protections is weak.

“The objective of the training is to improve the ability for law enforcement officials to promote social protection and legal services to victims of Sexual Gender-Based Violence and human trafficking,” said IOM's Project Manager for Migration Crisis and Response Unit, Teranishi Etsuko.

The training introduced legal provisions and focused on the Sexual Offences Act and Counter-Trafficking in Persons Act.

Participants were taken through the motions on the details of the Acts both from victims and perpetrators perspectives. They also discussed ways on how to identify the victims, how to handle vulnerable cases and how to provide assistance.

“This training is very critical especially when it comes to understanding the details of the Acts and to draw real life experiences from our counterparts in other counties”, said Nuria Gollo, a District Children Officer from one of the counties.

The training is part of IOM’s efforts to enhance resilience and strengthen the provision of protection services to vulnerable groups in Northern Kenya, with funding from SIDA.

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FIFTEEN Kenyan Women County Assembly Members attended a two-day training on Media and Communication Skills in April 2014 in Kisumu, Kenya.

The training was organized by UNESCO in partnership with the African Woman and Child Features Service. It aimed at building capacities of women Members of County Assemblies (MCAs) by equipping them with media and communication skills to enable them contribute to the advancement of their counties. The training was also to encourage county governments to embrace gender equality principles as a prerequisite for sustainable county development.

During the training participants were equipped with skills on how to generate
gender-sensitive reports while working with the media and how to leverage the importance of gender in development, especially with the current devolved system of governance in Kenya. This training was based on UNESCO’s “Getting the Balance Right: Gender Equality In Journalism Handbook”.

A Member of the County Delegated Legislation Committee, Lucy Nyagithii stated that “the media in Kenya has always failed to use its priming and framing abilities to capture the voices of women County Assembly Members and therefore this training provides us with a great opportunity to gain knowledge and sharpen skills for future engagement with the media to increase coverage of issues affecting women in our counties”.

Similar sentiments were echoed by Salome Wairimu, a Member of Trade, Investment and Industrial Committee who said that “the training has come at an opportune time and this will enable us to now understand how we can relate with the media, how they work, communicate, package and frame issues affecting women in our counties”.

Some women County Assembly Members also noted that media apathy continues to dominate the coverage of women issues at the county level with men continuing to be presented as the dominant frame and drivers of the devolution process in the counties.

This training workshop was informed by lack of gender perspectives in decisions and actions at both national and county governments in Kenya, with the problem pronounced at the county government level. It was formulated on a background of two studies that were carried out by the African Woman and Child Features Service on Gender in the News and the other one by the Media Council of Kenya on Media Coverage of the Devolution Process in Kenya that revealed that most stories in the media were male centered thus giving men a vantage point.

The training forms part of UNESCO’s ongoing initiatives of building capacity of women and enhancing pluralistic media, including by adopting gender-sensitive policies. It is implemented within the framework of the UN-Government of Kenya Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment.
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