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## **Outgoing UN peacekeeping chief hails achievements of blue helmets**



Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations

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The outgoing head of United Nations peacekeeping today outlined the achievements of his department's numerous missions around the world, saying peacekeepers had protected civilians and brought stability to many countries where they were deployed.

From Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to Haiti and Timor-Leste, UN peacekeepers deserve greater recognition for their service to both the UN and the world, Alain Le Roy, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, told his final press conference.

“Our mission in Liberia transformed the situation,” he said, referring to the West African nation where a UN operation ([UNMIL](#)) has been in place since 2003. “The President of Liberia [Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf] every day is praising our work. There is much more stability [and] there will be presidential elections later in the year.”

On Haiti, Mr. Le Roy pointed out that, before last year’s devastating earthquake, the country had enjoyed five years of stability as a result of the work of a UN mission ([MINUSTAH](#)). After the quake the mission prevented a descent into “total chaos,” he added.

Despite frequent incidents of rape and other forms of violence in the DRC, the UN mission to the country ([MONUSCO](#)) has not received due credit for providing protection to millions of civilians, particularly in the DRC’s volatile east, Mr. Le Roy said.

“The situation in DRC is so much better than three years ago,” he noted.

Mr. Le Roy attributed the success of January’s referendum that paved the way for THE secession of South Sudan to the presence of the then UN peacekeeping mission in Sudan ([UNMIS](#)).

“Nobody a few months ago expected a referendum to be on time, fair, credible [and] accepted by both parties with no fighting. Who made that possible? The mission on the ground.”

He acknowledged that during recent fighting in Sudan’s Southern Kordofan state UNMIS was not able to protect some civilians. However, he said the troops had established a safe area near their base in the town of Kadugli where thousands of civilians had sought safety and protection.

On Côte d’Ivoire, Mr. Le Roy recalled that UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay had stated that without the presence of the UN operation ([UNOCI](#)), the post-election violence earlier this year would have been much worse.

The UN Interim Force in Lebanon ([UNIFIL](#)) had also managed to prevent an escalation of the conflict and enabled the Lebanese armed forces to extend their patrols beyond the Litani River in the country’s south, Mr. Le Roy said.

“There are so many achievements... I say that in fact for our peacekeepers because in the media there are always the failures, the weaknesses and we acknowledge the failures... But at the same time our peacekeepers are working in extremely difficult conditions in places where nobody wants to go and they are in some cases risking their lives,” said Mr. Le Roy.

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