



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



UN staff honour colleagues who fell in line of duty with memorial service



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (left) and General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser light candle at memorial service

21 November 2011 –

United Nations staff, led by [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon and General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, today mourned the lives of colleagues that perished in the line of duty with a memorial service at UN Headquarters in New York.

Since March 2010, 195 men and women died in various incidents around the world; 95 were military personnel, 23 police, and 77 civilians. While ceremonies have been held on an

individual basis, Mr. Ban [said](#) today's memorial service would mark the beginning of a new tradition, in which a ceremony will be held every year for all staff who die while serving the UN.

“UN staff give the world daily profiles in courage and commitment... Immersing themselves in their work and their communities, they show the world the great, caring face of the United Nations,” Mr. Ban said.

“Our best tribute to them, beyond today's memorial, is to continue the life-saving and life-enhancing work for which they gave their lives.”

Mr. Ban added that the UN is taking all necessary measures to protect its staff, and called on countries to ensure those who commit crimes against them are punished.

“We continue modernizing our security operations, from infrastructure to threat analysis, training and protection. We are strengthening what we do for families in the aftermath of death and disaster. And we are pressing governments to uphold their responsibility not only to provide security, but to prosecute those who target UN staff for violence,” he said.

Recent deadly incidents include a terrorist attack on UN premises in Abuja, Nigeria; a suicide attack in Afghanistan near a refugee compound; two plane crashes – one in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and one in Bolivia; and an attack against aid workers in Sudan.

“I would like to express my deepest respect and gratitude to those who have served the UN around the world – far from their countries and loved ones – and who have suffered the ultimate sacrifice,” [said](#) Mr. Al-Nasser.

“I would like to underscore that the safety and security of UN personnel – civilian and uniformed – must be a top priority for all involved: the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat. To this end, we have to work closely with host countries, who bear the primary responsibility for safety and security on their respective territories,” he added.

Mr. Al-Nasser commended the Secretariat's work on the implementation of increased safety and security policies, and said that their execution on all missions would allow for a better assessment of the risks associated with UN operation in the field, leading to better operational decisions in the future.

“For all the men, women and children whose lives are richer and safer thanks to the dedication of our staff, there have been those who were lost – the UN personnel who sacrificed their lives for a noble cause,” he said.

“As we remember our fallen colleagues, we are all encouraged by their remarkable dedication, and are inspired to work even harder for the collective cause envisaged in the United Nations Charter: to keep peace and to promote better standards of life in larger freedom.”

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

[With wreath-laying ceremony, UN staff mourn colleagues killed in line of duty](#)