

Saving lives under fire: Peacekeepers from Pakistan

On International Day of UN Peacekeepers, the United Nations releases a video featuring a peacekeeper from Pakistan who saved lives under fire.



Major Furqan Niazi from Pakistan.

ISLAMABAD, May 29th, 2024 – As the world celebrates International Day of UN Peacekeepers today, the United Nations in Pakistan has released a short video featuring the selfless actions of a peacekeeper from Pakistan, Major Furqan Niazi, who saved lives under fire while losing one his colleagues.

In January this year, an ambush on a UN vehicle transporting injured civilians to the hospital left a peacekeeper from Pakistan, Sepoy Muhammad Tariq, and several community members dead in the disputed territory of Abyei. Those who survived owe their

lives to the courage and bravery of peacekeepers serving with the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), a contested border region between Sudan and South Sudan -- including Major Furqan, who was shot and injured.

"I spent nearly two months in treatment. The biggest motivating factor for me was my family, how I was going to see my daughter, wife and mother, all of my family members," Major Furqan told the UN as he recovered at home in Islamabad. He is expected to go back to the mission next month.

"I am really excited. I am going to the place where all of this happened", he said. "I will see that place after the storm where so many people lost their lives, I got injured, and my fellow peacekeeper lost his life. The biggest driving factor for me is to complete the mission with the people who always have my back."

On May 29th every year, the world celebrates International Day of UN Peacekeepers and pays tribute to all those who have served to protect peace in some of the most dangerous and inhospitable places on earth.

"Peacekeepers from Pakistan are part of a long tradition of women and men who embody humanity's highest ideal: achieving peace," said Mohamed Yahya, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Pakistan. "At great personal risk, they protect the most vulnerable communities affected by conflict. Today we pay tribute to all of them, including Major Furqan Niazi, Sepoy Muhammad Tariq, and all their comrades who were injured or made the ultimate sacrifice to protect peace and human life."

More than 200,000 Pakistani service women and men have served in 46 UN Missions since 1960 – including at least 160 who lost their lives. Pakistan is currently the 5th largest contributing country to UN peacekeeping with about 4,300 military and police personnel serving in seven locations around the world.

Note to editors:

- The video can be watched here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RufpPXogmik>
- The video can be downloaded in several formats here, along with a photo:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1OmLoNWQ6FJb0_N8Jm7UfnfG0oUzEKC8k?usp=sharing

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