

14 November 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Vuk Jeremić,
President of the 67th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Memorial Service to Honor UN Staff Members
who have lost their lives in serving the Organization**

Mr. Secretary-General, Madam Ban Soon-taek,
Distinguished Guests, Families and Friends of the deceased,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for being here whether in person or via video link.

As members of the UN family, we come together to honor the memory of the 29 colleagues who fell while serving the United Nations over the past year.

They worked in some of the world's most dangerous environments, never far from harm's way.

Accepting such a call takes a special type of character one that combines traits such as devotion, bravery and self-sacrifice, which our 29 fallen colleagues surely possessed.

The names of each of them have now been inscribed in the UN's roll-call of valor.

Some were peacekeepers; others policemen; still others civilian staff members. They each bore the UN badge on their helmet, jacket or identity card, sending out a message of reassurance and solidarity to the communities they worked in a visible reminder that the world has not forgotten their plight.

That badge remains a universal emblem of hope. People in distress know they can seek help, support and shelter from the brave men and women who wear it, for that badge symbolizes humanity's protective shield, dedicated to 'saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war,' in the words of the UN Charter's Preamble.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This ceremony allows us to remember and grieve for the fallen alongside their families. It also bids us to think more deeply not only about their lives, but our own as well to ask ourselves what more we can do to serve the cause of peace and reconciliation. Our pledge to carry on their work is perhaps the most meaningful affirmation we can make to ensure they did not die in vain.

Let that commitment be a living memorial to them and to all those whom Martin Luther King once defined as ‘dedicated individuals whose tireless exertions and passionate concern for mankind bring us a step closer to achieving the goal of justice.’

In my own name and that of my staff, and on behalf of the General Assembly, allow me to express my deepest condolences to the families of the deceased, and to their friends and colleagues.

May they rest in peace.

Thank you for your attention.