

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS AT JOINT TRAINING CENTRE
FOR PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS (CAECOPAZ)
Campo de Mayo, Argentina, 14 June 2011**

Your Excellency Mr. Arturo Puricelli, Minister of Defense,
Your Excellency Mr. Héctor Marcos Timerman, Minister of External Relations,
Your Excellency Mr. Andrés Allamand Zavala, Minister of Defense of Chile,
[Your Excellency Mr. Alfredo Moreno Charme, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile,]
Colonel Claudio Javier Piedrabuena, Director of CAECOPAZ,
Distinguished members of the military and diplomatic corps,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be with you.

This centre is not just a training ground or collection of barracks; it is a symbol of Argentina's commitment to peace.

When people are caught up in conflict, Argentina is there to help.

When countries join together to mount a peace operation, Argentina's troops, police and observers, women and men alike, spring into action under the blue flag of the United Nations.

That includes working closely with your good partner Chile – as shown by the Cruz del Sur agreement whose signing we have just witnessed.

Argentina's participation in United Nations peacekeeping dates back more than half a century, to the deployment of a party of military observers in Lebanon in 1958.

In the 1990s, as conflict raged through the Balkans, Argentina sent large and much-needed contingents to UNPROFOR, the UN Protection Force, signifying a welcome step up in commitment.

Today, Argentina's peacekeeping personnel span the world – from the Americas to Africa and the Middle East. You are our second biggest contributor in Cyprus, and part of the backbone of our mission in Haiti.

The late Hedi Annabi, known to all of you here, was always impressed with the Argentine peacekeepers of MINUSTAH.

“See how they protect us”, he would say; “not just with muscles, but with skills”.

Thank you for honouring him with a sculpture and plaque. This gesture means a lot to the United Nations. Many decades worth of peacekeepers benefited from Hedi's dedicated service.

The skills he saw in the highly trained troops and police of Argentina were nurtured here, at this extraordinary training centre. I am pleased to see it first-hand.

Your International Military Observers Course upholds the highest professional standards.

I especially welcome the presence of trainers from Brazil, Chile, France and the United States... the training you provide to other countries... and your growing ties with peacekeeping training centres across the region and around the world.

All of this makes CAECOPAZ a very important partner of the United Nations.

Peacekeeping is now in its 63rd year.

The practice has evolved dramatically. Where once our operations largely patrolled static cease-fire lines, today they are typically dynamic and multi-dimensional.

This evolution has been difficult at times. Alongside important successes, there have been too many cases in which expectations have outstripped abilities and demands have ignored realities on the ground, especially when it comes to civilian protection.

We have learned the hard way about the critical importance of unity of purpose, adequate mandates, appropriate force structure, and efficient command and control systems.

We know that any operation must have the unified support of the international community, the Security Council and the troop contributing countries.

And we have seen that the credibility and effectiveness of an operation are also affected by the speed with which troop contributing countries deploy and carry out humanitarian and peacekeeping tasks.

The contributions of Argentina and Chile in the aftermath of Haiti earthquake are a strong case in point. Together, you have helped to stabilize the country. Together, you are working to consolidate recent progress in recovery, reconstruction and the political process so that Haiti can address its daunting economic and institutional challenges.

Twenty Argentine peacekeepers have given their lives while serving the cause of peace around the world. Fourteen Chileans have done so. We will never forget these sacrifices, and the bravery of the fallen.

No doubt we will mourn again; we know that peacekeeping in remote and dangerous places entails risk.

But we also know this: this centre is giving the peacekeepers who venture out into the field the best possible training.

You are not just teaching tactics, important as they are. You are not just studying strategy.

You are developing the very spirit of peacekeeping -- a spirit of solidarity with people facing dire situations -- a spirit that says the United Nations will be there to help.

On behalf of the United Nations, I would like to express my gratitude to the people and peacekeepers of Argentina, Chile and all other countries who pass through this centre on the way to their vitally important engagements. We have utmost admiration for your work – here at these training grounds and, most of all, out in the proving grounds, where violence and disaster threaten our efforts to build a better world for all.

Thank you.