

## [FROM THE FIELD: Guinean peacekeepers walk a fine line in Mali](#)

A team of Guinean peacekeepers deployed to the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali, (MINUSMA) is playing a key role in removing explosives from areas in which the mission is operating.



MINUSMA/Harandane Dicko

Mali, in West Africa, is currently the most dangerous place in the world to serve as a peacekeeper. Some 850 Guinean blue helmets are based in the volatile town of Kidal, in the north of the conflict-affected country.

Roadside bombs are a constant hazard there and it's the role of the Search and Detect team from Guinea to make sure those explosive devices do not kill or maim peacekeepers nor civilians.

Read more [here](#) about the work of the peacekeepers:

And see more powerful images from MINUSMA, [here](#):

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## [Political incitement to violence against journalists is 'toxic': UN experts](#)

A group of independent, UN-appointed human rights experts have called on world leaders to stop inciting hatred and violence against the media, citing the hundreds of journalists killed or forcibly detained because of their work, and ensure that those responsible are held accountable.

On Wednesday, the experts, including David Kaye, [Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression](#), Agnes Callamard, Special Rapporteur on [extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions](#); and Bernard Duhaime, Chair of the Working Group on [Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances](#), released a statement ahead of the [International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists](#), on 2 November.

The statement said that “these last weeks have demonstrated once again the toxic nature and outsized reach of political incitement against journalists, and we demand that it stop,” and strongly urged States to take firm steps to ensure accountability for violence and attacks against journalists, reversing and resisting the appalling trend of impunity.”

They particularly highlighted the killing earlier this month of Saudi dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi, and condemned the response of States, the international community and the United Nations itself, for the failure to address his enforced disappearance and apparent murder.

“The only way forward is to establish an independent, transparent and credible investigation into his murder, one authorised by and reporting to the United Nations. Anything short of a complete investigation, recognised as such by the international community, will make a mockery of government claims of commitment to the safety of journalists.”

## **One journalist killed every four days**

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) says that, between 2006 and 2017, over 1,000 journalists were killed for reporting the news and bringing information to the public; an average of one death every four days.

In nine out of ten cases the killers go unpunished, and this impunity, say the UN experts, triggers further violence and attacks: perpetrators must be brought to justice, and victims and families should have access to remedies.

High-level international commitments already exist, such as a [resolution](#) on the safety of journalists, adopted by the Human Rights Council in September. The UN experts called on world leaders to implement such resolutions and end their role in inciting hatred and violence against the media.

On this year’s International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, UNESCO is launching a new campaign, Truth Never Dies, to raise awareness of this situation, and is calling for media partners to support the initiative by publishing stories by, and about, journalists killed as a result of their work. A [toolkit](#) is available for media that wish to take part.



UNESCO, DDB

UNESCO #TruthNeverDies campaign to end impunity for journalists killings.

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## [Security Council extends mandate of UN peace mission in Western Sahara by six months](#)

The United Nations Security Council, on Wednesday, extended the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), until 30 April next year.

Adopting resolution 2240 (2018), by a recorded vote of 12 in favour and 3 abstentions, the Security Council underscored the need for a “realistic, practicable and enduring political solution” to the question of Western Sahara.

In that context, the 15-member Council expressed “full support” for the Secretary-General’s plan to initiate renewed negotiations before the end of 2018 and urged all parties to resume dialogue, in good faith, towards a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, “which will provide for the self determination of the people of Western Sahara.”

Originally [established](#) in 1991, in accordance with settlement proposals accepted in 1988 by Morocco and the Frente Polisario movement, [MINURSO](#) was tasked with the monitoring of the ceasefire; overseeing the exchange of prisoners of war; repatriation of refugees; and the eventual organization of

a free and fair referendum in which the people of Western Sahara would choose between independence and integration with Morocco.

While the organization of the referendum has not been possible to date, other requirements of the mandate have been pursued successfully and the peacekeeping mission continues to monitor the ceasefire, conduct mine clearance operations, and supports confidence building measures.

MINURSO has also been providing assistance to irregular migrants as well as humanitarian assistance in case of natural disasters.

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## [UN chief appoints Norwegian diplomat as his new envoy for Syria](#)

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed veteran Norwegian diplomat Geir O. Pedersen as his next Special Envoy for Syria.

Mr. Pedersen succeeds Staffan de Misutra, who announced earlier this month that he will be stepping down in November after serving as the UN chief's top envoy for the war-battered nation for over four years.

According to a [note](#) issued by the [Secretary-General](#)'s office, Mr. Pedersen "brings to the position decades of political and diplomatic experience", having served both in Government and UN capacities, including as Norway's Ambassador to China since last year and as Permanent Representative to the UN for five years, from 2012.

At the UN, Mr. Pedersen served as the Special Coordinator for Lebanon between 2007 and 2008, and before that, was Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Southern Lebanon. He was also Director of Asia-Pacific Division at the Department of Political Affairs.

Born in Oslo on 28 September 1955, he is married and has five children. The UN chief also expressed his "deepest gratitude" to Mr. de Mistura, an Italian national, for his "concerted efforts and contributions to the search for peace in Syria."

Appointed the Special Envoy in July 2014, Mr. de Mistura continued to work with all parties involved in the Syrian conflict to push for lasting peace, in line with Security Council resolution 2254, which endorsed a Syrian-led, Syrian-owned roadmap towards peace.

► [RELATED: I will 'spare no effort' to resolve impasse – de Mistura](#)

Though his tenure coincided with the bloodiest period of the crisis, with warring sides employing "medieval sieges", barrel bombs, human shields and

snipers in densely populated civilian areas, an undeterred de Mistura continued to push all sides in the conflict to adhere to the peace roadmap as well as urging that world leaders seize any “window of opportunity” to end the war.

The crisis in Syria, which started with largely peaceful protests against President Assad in March 2011, has so far claimed over 400,000 lives and driven some 11.7 million people from their homes, including over 5.5 million to seek refuge into neighbouring countries.

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## [‘United against hate’: UN chief and religious leaders honour victims of Pittsburgh synagogue shooting](#)

Calling for solidarity against anti-Semitism, [United Nations Secretary-General](#) António Guterres, addressed an inter-faith tribute held on Wednesday in New York’s historic Park East Synagogue, to honour victims of Saturday’s mass-shooting in Pittsburgh.

More than 200 people gathered at the historic synagogue on Manhattan’s Upper East Side, including local leaders of different faiths and denominations, who joined diplomats and others to call on all communities to stand “united against hate”.

The deadly mass-shooting by a lone gunman at the Tree of Life synagogue, in the US city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, during Sabbath celebrations, left 11 people dead and six wounded.

I have seen the best of Man and the worst of Man, and the best of Man will prevail – *Senior Rabbi, Arthur Schneier*

“Since I became Secretary-General I have been raising my voice against what I believe is the rise of anti-Semitism in many of our societies, and mainly in my part of the world in Europe, but also importantly in North America” said Mr. Guterres, as he denounced Saturday’s “horrendous act.”

Citing other forms of anti-religious hatred being witnessed today – including against Muslims and Christians worldwide – he noted that anti-Semitism is the “oldest and more permanent form of hatred” to have endured “in the history of humankind”.

Calling for a “strong investment in the social cohesion of societies”, he stressed the responsibility of leaders of international organizations,

political parties, religions and civil-society organizations, to “address the root causes that are undermining” this cohesion and “creating conditions for these forms of hatred to become more and more frequent, and more negative in the way they are expressed.”



UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

UN Secretary-General António Guterres addresses an interfaith gathering at Park East Synagogue in New York City (31 October 2018)

The remembrance, titled “United against hate,” opened with a rendition of the song “Oseh Shalom” – which means “make peace” in Hebrew – by the Park East Day School children’s choir.

The synagogue’s Senior Rabbi, Arthur Schneier, a Holocaust survivor whose family was killed in the Auschwitz Nazi death camp, stated in his opening remarks: “I have been through the worst. I have seen the best of Man and the worst of Man, and the best of Man will prevail.”

Sheikh Musa Drammeh, Chairman of the Islamic Cultural Center of North America said that “it is time for this nation to rise to the occasion and to make this union a more perfect union and to prohibit hate.”

The UN Secretary-General, who previously headed the UN refugee agency, [UNHCR](#), noted he had worked closely with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) during that time, and had tremendous respect for its work. The Tree of Life Congregation’s support for HIAS, was one of the factor’s which drove the anti-Semitic gunman to target the synagogue.

“They are a true expression of humanitarianism, but also of humanism and solidarity,” he said, regretting that the alleged perpetrator of the attack chose to target an organization that “is the symbol of everything [he considers] good in the world”.

Other faith leaders in attendance, expressing their common rejection of all

forms of violence, intolerance and anti-Semitism, included Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York; Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; and Archbishop Auza, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations.