

FEATURE: Images of the legacy of the UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti

12 October 2017 – The United Nations peacekeeping mission in Haiti, known as MINUSTAH, will close on 15 October 2017, replaced with a smaller group of police and civilian officers who will help the Government to strengthen rule of law and security in the Caribbean country.

The departure of the more than 2,300 peacekeepers was approved by the Security Council, which decided in April that the mission needs to change as the country's political situation has changed.

During its 13 years, MINUSTAH peacekeepers saved tens of thousands of lives, and helped the country to rebuild, including from an earthquake that killed more than 250,000 people and claimed the lives of 102 UN personnel – the single greatest loss of UN lives in history.

As MINUSTAH wraps up, take a look at its lasting contributions to Haiti, its people and its Government.

MINUSTAH was established in 2004 in response to the deteriorating political and security situation in Haiti. The mission was mandated to ensure a secure and stable environment within which the constitutional and political processes could take place. Pictured, amid gunfire, a Brazilian military contingent in October 2004 secures the port near the slum area of La Saline.

An earthquake hit Haiti on 12 January 2010, killing some 250,000 people, including 102 UN staff. In the wake of the earthquake, UN peacekeepers – who also lost their homes and colleagues – refocused their efforts to support Haiti's recovery and reconstruction. Above, a first aid station set up by UN peacekeepers shortly after the earthquake.

A member of MINUSTAH's civilian policing (CIVPOL) unit patrolling the neighbourhood of Bel-Aire on foot, assisted by the Haitian National Police, in December 2014. MINUSTAH helped to restore Haitian National Police control of many neighbourhoods around the capital, Port-au-Prince, once controlled by gangs.

The UN Mission has provided technical and security support to electoral processes since 2004. Haiti returned to full constitutional order following parliamentary elections in 2016 and the appointment of a president. Pictured, MINUSTAH personnel deliver electoral material to regions around the country for the Senatorial elections in June 2009.

MINUSTAH also worked to help Haitians during a number of natural disasters over the past 13 years, including heavy rains from tropical storm Noel in 2007, which left thousands of people homeless. Above, a Brazilian UN peacekeeper rescues a baby and his family from a flooded home in Cite Soleil.

The Security Council visited Haiti most recently in June of this year. During the visit, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to the Government and the people of Haiti, and to contributing to the country's stability and development. Pictured, Members of the Security Council meet with Haiti's Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aviol Fleurant, and other Government officials.

The Council extended MINUSTAH's mandate in April 2017 for a final six months, deciding to replace it with a smaller follow-up peacekeeping mission that would focus on helping to strengthen the rule of law in Haiti. Above, UN peacekeepers patrol Lake Azule for illegal trafficking of materials.

Among the UN's ongoing efforts in Haiti is the fight against cholera. In December 2016, then-Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon put forward a New Approach to Cholera in Haiti to demonstrate the Organization's commitment to eliminating the disease. He also apologized to the Haitian people, stating that the UN had not done enough with regard to the 2010 cholera outbreak and its subsequent spread. Pictured, residents near a natural spring in Fondwa collect drinkable water.

Ahead of MINUSTAH's closure on 15 October 2017, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission, Sandra Honoré, inspects for the last time the all-female Bangladeshi Formed Police Unit (FPU) serving with the Mission. The force spent more than seven years in Haiti.