

Guterres welcomes successful wrap up of long-running UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia

Secretary-General [António Guterres](#) has welcomed the successful conclusion of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia ([UNMIL](#)), which officially closed its doors on Friday, and congratulated the West African country's people and Government for turning the page on crisis and conflict.

In a [statement](#) from a UN spokesman, the Secretary-General also commended the Government's ongoing efforts to keep Liberia on the path the peace and sustainable development.

The UN chief appreciated the contributions of all partners in the Liberian peace process over the years, particularly the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), whose green helmets laid the foundation for UN peacekeepers in Liberia ahead of UNMIL's establishment in 2003.

Mr. Guterres also expressed appreciation for the excellent leadership of his Special Representative for Liberia, Farid Zarif, and thanked all previous leaders of the Mission, and paid tribute to all uniformed and civilian personnel who served with UNMIL.

"The Secretary-General expresses his profound respect to the memory of the 202 peacekeepers who lost their lives in the service of peace during the nearly 15 years the Mission was deployed in Liberia," said the statement, adding that the UN chief also expressed his gratitude to all troop- and police-contributing countries.

Even though the peacekeeping operation has wound down, the UN family still present in Liberia will remain committed to supporting the Government-led reform process "with a view to ensuring that the hard-won peace can be sustained and the country and its people will continue to progress and thrive," the statement concluded.

Liberia, the first independent country in Africa, enjoyed nearly a century and a half of stability before falling into chaos, enduring two devastating civil wars between 1989 and 2003.

More than a quarter of a million Liberians were killed and nearly a third of the population was uprooted.

The UN Security Council established the peacekeeping mission for Liberia in October 2003, as violence lingered even after warring factions agreed to a cease-fire and a plan for political rebuilding.

Get all the facts and figures about UNMIL's operations [here](#).