

[INTERVIEW: 'I want to contribute to the service of humanity,' says first-time UN peacekeeper from Indonesia](#)

It is Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro's first deployment with an international peacekeeping operation. The Indonesian police officer serves with the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), a region of Sudan where conflict has left some 2.7 million people displaced and over 2 million in need of humanitarian assistance.

Peace has remained elusive in Darfur, where some 16,000 [UNAMID](#) personnel are deployed to protect civilians, facilitate humanitarian aid and help the political process. While Mr. Yudhantoro says his days are filled with "amazing experiences," he notes that working in an environment with civilian, police and military components from different parts of the world has its challenges. *This interview has been edited for content and clarity.*

UN News: Tell us a little bit about your background.

Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro: My name is Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro. I'm with the Indonesian Formed Police Unit (FPU)-10 here in UNAMID. Back home, I am stationed in West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. I graduated from the Indonesian Police Academy in 2007 and have served with the Indonesian National Police for the past 10 years. Additionally, I studied policing science, criminal investigation, cyber analysis, intelligence analysis and Japanese at the Indonesian Police Language School. Prior to joining UNAMID, I held the position of Chief, Intelligence Division in West Lombok District Police, Indonesia.

UN News: How long have you been with UNAMID and what are your responsibilities?

Serving in a UN peacekeeping mission requires a high standard of capability, solid discipline and quick decision-making in response to emerging situations.

Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro: I have been here for three months. My main responsibilities entail management of the operational duties of the Indonesian FPU, which involves controlling the personnel's operational activities in the field, in my role as operational officer in my contingent.

UN News: What led you to join the mission?

Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro: My motivation was basically driven by my need to gain experience in the field, working for an international peacekeeping mission. I also want to enhance my knowledge about the UN and AU peacekeeping

mission operational skills. Most importantly, I want to contribute to the service of humanity, as this is enshrined in our nation's principles. I have, since my arrival in Darfur, observed that the conflict which took place here in this region requires the presence and services of dedicated peacekeepers who can provide the necessary protection and humanitarian assistance to the affected communities.

UN News: Describe what a typical day at the mission is like for you.

Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro: For me, all days here are full of amazing experiences. As an operational officer, my activities start around 8 a.m., when I take the morning roll call. From 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., I conduct daily training for the Tactical Section in our Camp. From 11 a.m. until 1 p.m., I go to Main Road and Khutum Road for inspection of our peacekeepers on duty. At around about 3 p.m., I come back to my office to lead the meeting with the different sections in my contingent and also use the time to prepare the activity schedule for the following day. From 5 p.m. until around 7 p.m., I have my physical exercises to keep my body healthy. It's important to keep the mind and body in good shape to be able to offer full services as a peacekeeper in the mission.



UN Photo/Amin Ismail

Yudhantoro says serving in a UN peacekeeping mission requires a high standard of capability, solid discipline and quick decision-making in response to emerging situations.

UN News: What are some of the highlights of serving with the peacekeeping mission?

Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro: All our operations should conform to UN DPKO [[Department of Peacekeeping Operations](#)] rules and guidelines; we must adhere to relevant SOPs [Standard Operating Procedures] that govern our operations; we must always have utmost respect for diversity and humanity in our

workplace and operational area and create good relations with other peacekeepers we interact with daily in the mission area.

UN News: What are some of the challenges for you personally?

Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro: UNAMID is composed of so many civilian, police and military components from different parts of the world. That can be challenging in the operational space. All have different cultures and traditions. My challenge lies in the need to acquaint myself with the different norms and cultures of fellow peacekeepers; to respect and adapt quickly to these different work and social approaches; take on board the diverse local cultures, even in our operational plans; respect local laws; and deal with the harsh local weather!

UN News: What do your family and friends back home think about your service with [UN peacekeeping](#)?

Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro: They are very proud of me because being part of an international peacekeeping mission, especially one as large as UNAMID, is a major achievement. Not everyone in my country can get an opportunity to join a UN mission. I sincerely hope that after completion of my service with UNAMID, an opportunity will be availed to me to share my experiences, including the achievements and challenges of being a UN peacekeeper, and what the mission means to the host community.

UN News: How would you describe your overall experience as a UN peacekeeper? Is there one particular experience/memory you will take back with you when you return home?

Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro: Serving in a UN peacekeeping mission requires a high standard of capability, solid discipline and quick decision-making in response to emerging situations.

The memory I will take home is one related to the decision-making skills that I have certainly acquired since my arrival here, especially during my operational interactions with my counterparts within the contingent and from other components of the mission. This is especially true in my daily work, as I have to coordinate with other peacekeepers from other countries who may have different approaches or positions to issues at hand. In such cases, I have learnt to exercise the spirit of compromise and listening to ensure that we arrive at the best solution to the problem at hand, without prejudice to the people and the country we serve.

UN News: What would you say to others in your home country who are considering serving with the UN?

Hernawan Rizky Yudhantoro: I would strongly urge them to work hard to enhance their professional skills and capabilities, especially in operational conversations and decision-making; urge them to internalize their knowledge of UN SOPs and relevant guidelines; and polish up their English language skills – as you know language is the window to the world. And most importantly, I would urge them to have maximum respect for diversity and

humanity for the people they serve and serve with.