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## UN mourns Lebanon force staff member killed during Israel-Hizbollah conflict



**31 August 2006**

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The United Nations today held a solemn ceremony in Cyprus to mourn Augustine Bielonwu, a civilian staff member of the UN Interim Force for Lebanon (UNIFIL (<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unifil/unifilpress.htm>)) who died last month during an Israeli rocket attack in Tyre.

“His unexpected and tragic passing has shocked us all and filled our hearts with sorrow,” UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guéhenno told the gathering held at Columba’s Church in Nicosia.

Mr. Guéhenno paid tribute to the fallen staff member, who joined the UN in 1989 and served in Naquora, Rawalpindi, Kabul, Teheran and Laayoune. “Augustine was a paragon of courage, industry and unselfish devotion to duty. Those who knew him admired and respected him. He was gentlemanly, scholarly and kindly. He was an international civil servant in the very best sense of the term, and one who verily and truly exemplified the spirit of the United Nations.”

Mr. Bielonwu, who is survived by six children, was killed on 17 July during the fighting between Israel and Hizbollah when an Israeli rocket hit the building where he lived in Tyre. Four military observers from the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) deployed in southern Lebanon also died during this conflict.

Since its establishment in 1978, 258 UNIFIL (<https://unifil.unmissions.org>) staff members have died while in service with the mission.

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