

28 May 2021

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UN Volunteer Louise Gronmark, Political Affairs Officer and member of a multidisciplinary team from the Beni office, discusses the MONUSCO mandate with two women in the Eringeti area.

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UN Volunteers powered by passion are contributing to peace in the DRC

The challenges and threats faced this year by our UN Volunteers are greater than usual, as they had to cope with the COVID-19 crisis, and the continued need to support the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission (MONUSCO) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The passion to volunteer motivates our 350 UN Volunteers serving with MONUSCO to make a difference in people's life. Each of them is adding value to sustaining peace. I am humbled by their constant drive to deliver and learn, even in the face of dire difficulties.

The theme of the International Day of UN Peacekeepers this year is about leveraging the power of youth for peace and security. It relates well to the contributions UN Volunteers make to peace and development in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

“ The vision of the UN Volunteers (UNV) programme is of a peaceful and democratic society where the young play an active role in cultivating peace and development. We improve youth representation in political processes, and policies that directly impact their lives.

In 2020, UN Volunteer Eliza Nedyalkova (France) created an innovative academic partnership between the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) and the Free University of the Great Lakes Countries (Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs/ULPGL) in Goma. This enables young students to become socially engaged public figures who defend lives, rights and freedoms in DRC.

Carolina Meroni is the youngest MONUSCO civilian at 26 years old. Together with other UN Volunteers within the child protection section of the mission, she ensures that every child in DRC, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged, as well as war-affected and displaced children, live in dignity and have the right environment to pursue their dreams.

UN Volunteers are contributing to preventing the outbreak, continuation, escalation and recurrence of violent conflict. They play a very positive role in reinforcing peacebuilding in the eastern part of DRC. In North Kivu, UN Volunteers are working to gain the trust and cooperation of local communities. Among them is international Louise Gronmark, a UN Volunteer Political Affairs Officer. Louise is a member of the multidisciplinary team in the Beni office, who helps protect civilians better from attacks.

Our UN Volunteers bolster the delivery of MONUSCO programmes in many other ways. They strengthen humanitarian assistance, support electoral processes and respond to emergency health needs. With their specialized skills, they provide administrative, logistics, technical and medical expertise.

Abid Gul (Pakistan) serves as a UN Volunteer Pharmacist in Goma medical section. Together with his peers, he contributes to COVID-19 vaccine management, scheduling deliveries and ensuring cold chain storage, especially in remote areas.

“ It makes me proud to see how our UN Volunteers have chosen to stay and deliver even throughout the struggles of the COVID-19 pandemic. Their dedication and professionalism under all circumstances and with all challenges specific to this peacekeeping environment are impressive.



UN Volunteer Louise Gronmark, Political Affairs Officer and member of a multidisciplinary team from the Beni office, discusses the mission's mandate with two women in the Eringeti area. ©MONUSCO/Michael Ali, 2021



West and Central Africa

- International Day of UN Peacekeepers

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