

UN Peacekeeping Social Media Campaign

The road to a lasting peace: Leveraging the power of youth for peace and security

SUMMARY

Our campaign for this year's International Day of UN Peacekeepers was focused on youth, and on highlighting the significant role and meaningful contribution of young people to securing lasting peace. Throughout May 2021, we populated our social media channels, among others, with engaging visuals, playful GIFs, entertaining word games, youthful and dynamic graphics, videos and vlogs, and inspiring quote cards. We also hosted live discussions and Instagram take overs, launched a brand-new account on TikTok, and published stories from young people narrating their experience in conflict-ridden zones and how they make a difference in the lives of their communities. Breaking away from the traditional UN campaign approach, we were determined to be more dynamic, youthful and make innovative design choices to attract younger audiences. This award will be a recognition of the amazing teamwork of the Strategic Communications Section and our many collaborators from civil society and youth-groups, which went above and beyond to create a comprehensive and innovative campaign to increase the visibility of the international Youth, Peace and Security Agenda and more specifically advance the visibility of youths contributing to peace in our mission areas.

OBJECTIVES

In conflict-ridden countries, youth are commonly perceived as either perpetrators or victims. Their role in peace is poorly understood and is much more complex than stereotypes may suggest. As firm advocates of the huge potential of youth, we focused this year's International Day of UN Peacekeepers (29 May) campaign on them. Throughout May, we published approximately **800 posts** across our platforms focusing on the meaningful role of youth for peace. Our aim was to highlight our young personnel in their diversity and commend their work, increase the visibility of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda and showcase how peace operations collaborate with young people (18-29 years old) to implement mission mandates. This is an advocacy driven social media campaign.

STRATEGY

This campaign was targeting our younger audience, whom we wished to encourage to get involved in peace processes and make a difference on a local, national and international level, and consider joining peacekeeping. As young people often think of UN entities as overly official, we decided to "speak the language of youth", adopted a vibrant approach, and made our messages more relevant to them, whilst staying true to our profile.

Acknowledging that youth prefer content produced in a personable and relatable manner, we joined TikTok to raise awareness on our work and encourage youth to get involved in peace.

We produced a comprehensive set of digital assets, including longer-form texts, captivating visuals and some youth favourites such as ephemeral content (focusing on IG stories/lives), dynamic designs (GIPHYs, bold colours, non-static visuals etc.), personal storytelling (e.g., first-person pieces describing the experience of activists of peace), face filters, vlogs and viral trends (e.g., How it started vs How it's going).

For outreach, we focused on non-traditional partners (e.g., online gamers, digital media etc.), and brought on board an outreach expert to target specifically youth in Africa, where the largest peacekeeping missions are located.

IMPLEMENTATION

This campaign is quite different from the usual approach at the United Nations. Risks were taken in order to reach new and younger audiences!

- Breaking away from our traditional campaign style, we used **bold and youthful colours, creative, dynamic fonts and comic book-inspired figures** for visual assets. We produced non-static assets and GIPHYs to add a youthful flair.

UN Peacekeeping
@UNPeacekeeping

This Int'l Day of UN Peacekeepers, we're celebrating the crucial role of thousands of young peacekeepers deployed around the globe implementing their missions mandates and working with local youth to build sustainable peace. 🌍 #PKDay #YouthPeaceSecurity



2:00 AM · May 29, 2021 · Hootsuite Inc.

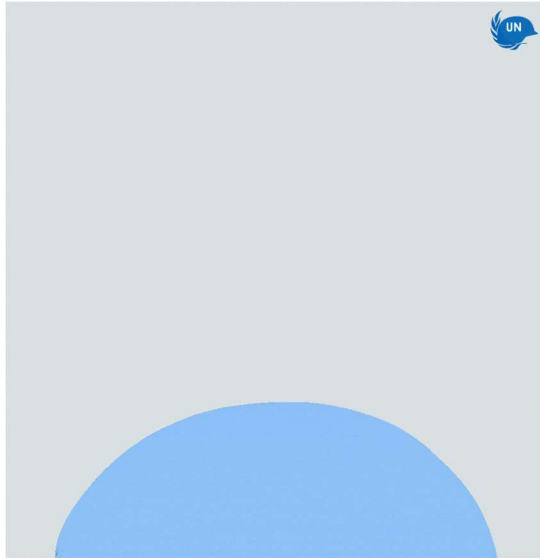
United Nations Peacekeeping
30 May · 🌐

Maximiser le potentiel et la créativité des jeunes est crucial pour prévenir les conflits et construire une paix durable. 🌍 #YouthPeaceSecurity #PKDay <http://ow.ly/7FR350EX0yK>

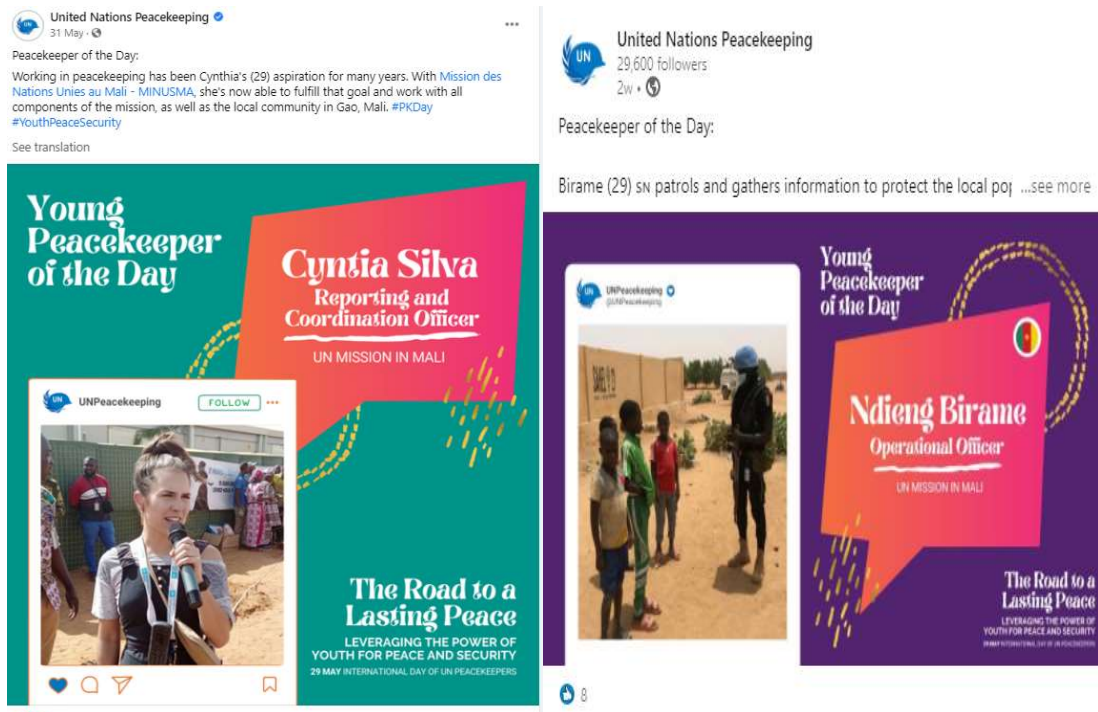




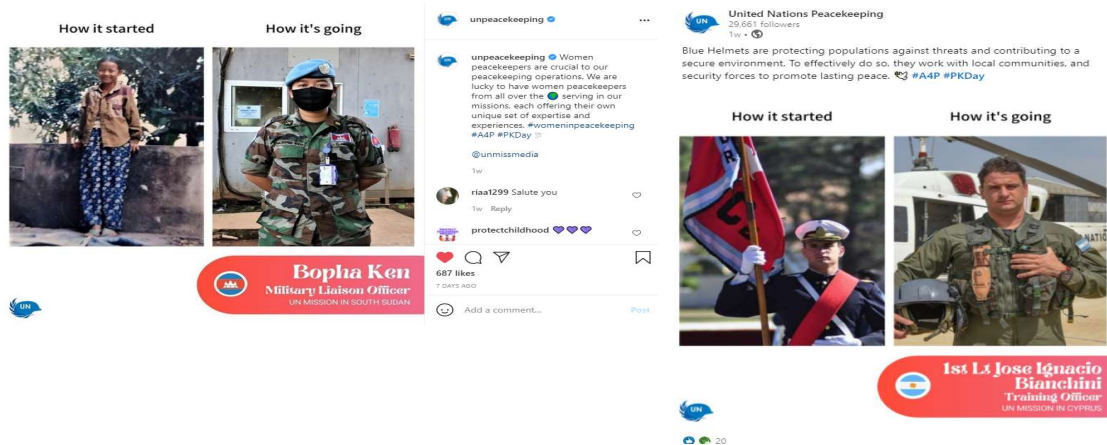
- We created an **artistic illustration** for this campaign, showcasing the indispensable role of youth in building peace in an allegorical manner.



- Throughout May, we highlighted 60 profiles of young women and men through the **“Young peacekeeper of the day”** feature, adding a human face to our peacekeepers.



- We shared before and after photos of peacekeepers utilizing the viral social media trend **“How it started vs How it’s going”**. Warmly welcomed by our audience, these posts were particularly successful on Instagram reaching a total of 190,000 people.



- We showcased the work of youth organizations/activists by sharing their story as narrated by them and by providing them a platform to discuss about peace.

Transforming violent behaviours into peacebuilding | Alpha's story from Sierra Leone

UN Peacekeeping Just now · 7 min read



By Alpha Koroma, Generations For Peace Lead Pioneer in Sierra Leone



From the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, the Mano River Basin sub-region of West Africa was torn by civil wars that started in Liberia, and soon spread to

A CONVERSATION ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

Kessy Martine Ekomo-Solignet,
Central African Republic

Community Leader and
Peacebuilding Practitioner

Engin Avci,
Kosovo

Activist and Educator

WE'RE GOING LIVE ON INSTAGRAM!

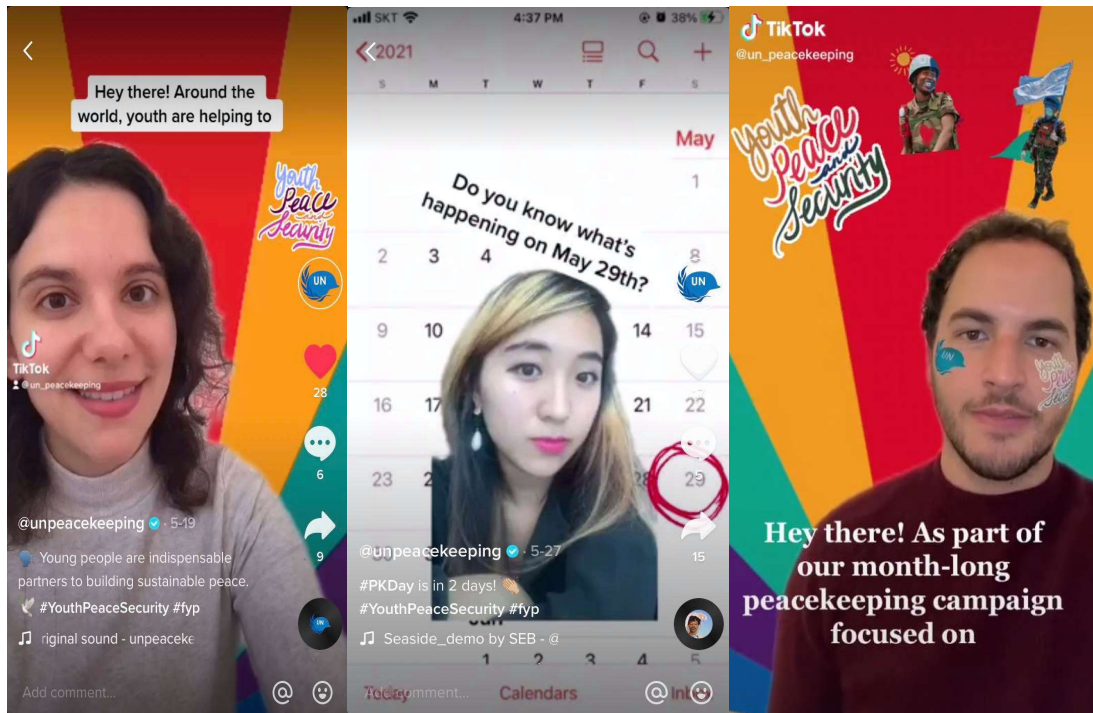
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@UNPeacekeeping

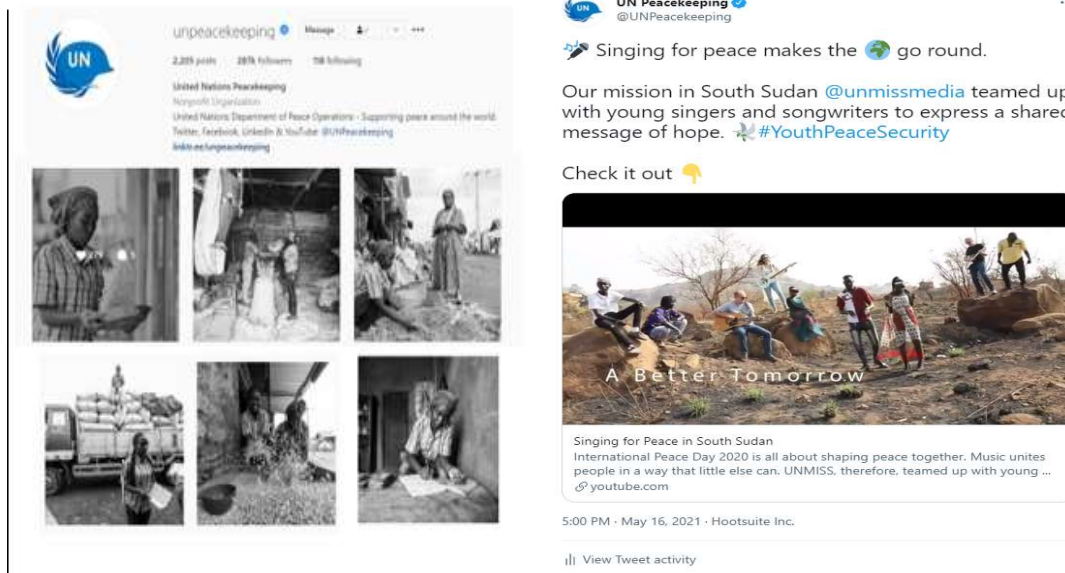
MODERATED BY

VAHE MIRIKYAN
Peace Direct

- We launched our **TikTok** account, sharing YPS-related videos featuring some of the youngest team members, and joining viral challenges and trends.



- We featured profiles of creative people promoting peace. We hosted an **Instagram takeover** with a young Congolese female photographer, and posted a video of young South Sudanese musicians singing for peace.



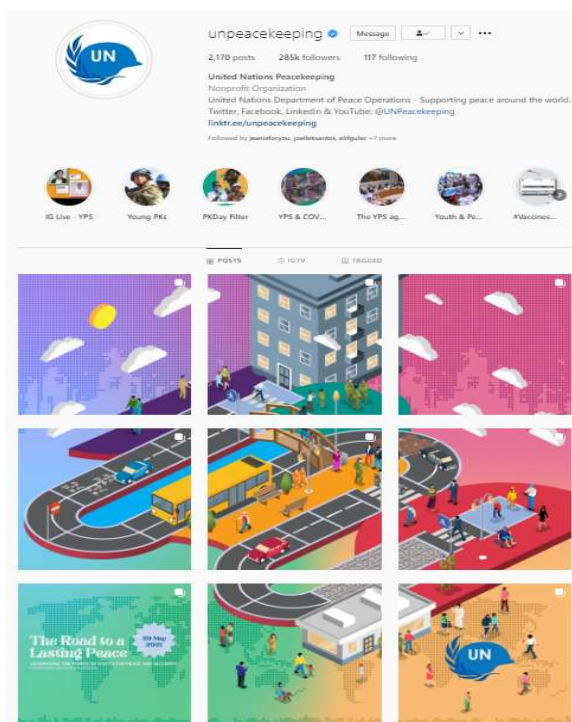
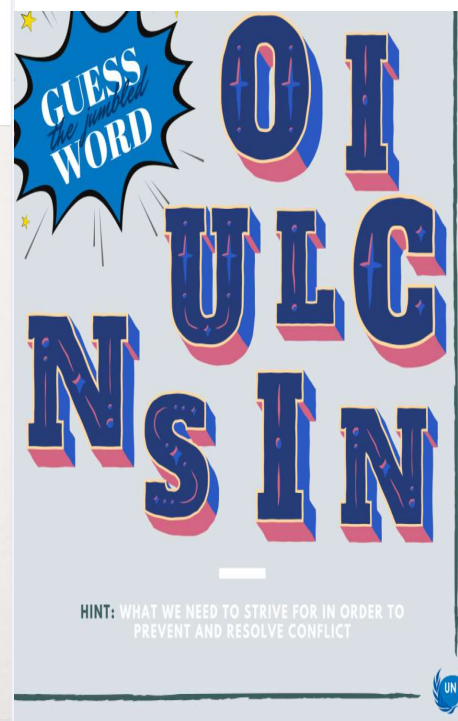
- For the first time in a similar campaign, we featured 2 **vlogs** from peacekeepers in the field in 3 languages.



- Among others, our video featuring 3 young creative people from South Sudan, Cyprus and the DRC was warmly welcomed across our social media channels. The main video of the campaign, showcasing the role that youth play both as peacekeepers and in their communities, was equally popular, gaining 59,000 impressions in Twitter alone.



- To add a playful tone, we created an **interactive mosaic** of 9 images which can be reconstructed into a road, echoing our theme (i.e., road to peace). We also posted **various games** challenging our audience to guess the right words leading to peace.



RESULTS

- Overall reach: **1.36 million** people on [Facebook](#) (+42% from 2020),
1.14 million people on [Instagram](#) (+114% from 2020)

3.37 million impressions on [Twitter](#) (+45% from 2020)

249,000 impressions on [LinkedIn](#).

- Facebook: 23.62% increase in engagement vs 2020 (29,000)
41.88% increase in organic reach vs 2020 (1,210,000).
- “Young Peacekeeper of the Day” reach:
504,000 people on Instagram
320,000 people on Facebook
746,000 impressions on Twitter
42,900 engagements on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.
- Our top story on Medium reached **2,000 views**, which is almost equal to the total views achieved in previous months by multiple stories [indicatively: March: 2,967 views, April: 2,236 views, May: 5,557 views].
- GIPHY stickers: **1.4 million views**.
- The campaign was enthusiastically welcomed by UN Member States, with 30 of them sharing our content in their platforms on the International Day of UN Peacekeepers alone, and with many more supporting the campaign throughout May. Among others, our message was shared by US Secretary of State and US Ambassador, Canadian Prime Minister, the UK Shadow Minister for the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, the Irish Defence Forces, the Minister of Defence of Canada, and the UNGA President.

WHY WE SHOULD WIN?

Having embraced a uniquely creative approach to disseminate the message of peace all around the world, we strongly believe our campaign deserves to win this award.

Our goal was to highlight the power of youth, and show that it should be leveraged for securing lasting peace. We aimed to highlight different ways that youth employ to help build lasting peace, such as through sports or arts.

Our campaign included an amazing variety of youth-tailored assets shared across our platforms. Committed to engaging with youth, we launched a TikTok account, redefined our communication and outreach strategies and gave a modern, dynamic and vibrant tone to our campaign. Thanks to the teamwork between all colleagues across the Strategic Communications Section, we sent a crystal-clear message: youth are essential actors of peace and must be included in decision-making.

URLS

Campaign <https://trello.com/b/D9aK7SI5/youth-peace-and-security-peacekeepers-day-2021>

Website <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/promoting-youth-peace-and-security>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/UNPeacekeeping>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/unpeacekeeping/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/unpeacekeeping>

TikTok <https://www.tiktok.com/@unpeacekeeping>

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/unpeacekeeping/mycompany/>

Medium <https://unpeacekeeping.medium.com>

Flickr <https://www.flickr.com/photos/unpeacekeeping/albums/72157719167690537>