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International Army War College students with peacekeeping experience were among those who recognized the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers during a ceremony in front of Root Hall May 29.

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May 29, 2013 -- On Monday the nation took time to remember the fallen American Soldiers who died defending their freedom. Today, the U.S. Army War College paused to remember the more than 3,000 'blue helmet' peacekeepers who have fallen in service to world peace, and in recognition and support of those serving in UN PK missions today.

The War College recognized the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers with a ceremony May 29 that included several international students who had served on such missions and remarks from **Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo**, War College Commandant, and Canadian **Brigadier General Karl D McQuillan**, Chief of Staff Land Operations.

“Being a peacekeeper is a noble role,” said Cucolo. “It requires unquestioned credibility in warrior skills and the discriminate application of force. It requires leaders who are masters of chaos and uncertainty. It requires warriors – the leaders and the led -- who have a reflexive desire to enforce basic human rights and simple justice; and the belief they can make a positive difference in the world – or at least in the human condition of the area for which they are responsible.”

While this was the first time The War College observed of the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, Cucolo said he hoped it becomes an annual tradition.

“The vast majority of your magnificent international classmates are from nations that contribute troops to UN and other peace and stability operations,” he said. “The aggregate losses among the nations represented by your international classmates are well over 2,000 killed in action while on these operations. It is only right that we pause and render honors to their losses, pay them our respect for what they have done in this area and take quiet pride together as a class and an organization in the international brother and sisterhood that is the profession of arms. What we do matters in the world.”

Cucolo also had a specific message for the American students.

“I’d like to drive home for my fellow Americans that even though the US financial support of these operations is significant, our priorities have obviously not been on peacekeeping operations lately,” he said. “I would offer to you, and it is only my opinion, that this will change in the future. I believe in our future, alliance operations will be much more frequent. There will be few places we will go alone as a nation and I would offer, too, that as this interconnected world of ours gets smaller and smaller, our national interests will require military influence and power in the human domain. I believe you will plan and execute peace and stability operations because **Landpower** will be the default solution to bring order to unstable corners of the human domain.

“This ceremony is punctuation mark reminder that these operations carry high risk and great cost for those who undertake them.”

Mc Quillian spoke of the history of UN Peacekeeping missions, which his nation has been a part of from the very beginning.

“For 57 years the UN has been executing peacekeeping missions, and along the way have lost 3,100 lives,” he said. “The importance of these efforts to reduce tensions around the world, protect civilians, support elections and restore the rule of law can’t be understated.”

International Army War College students with peacekeeping experience were among those who

recognized the day.

“Peacekeeping is different than war fighting,” said Canadian Army **Col. Marc Gagne**. “You have to balance many different factors and still maintain neutrality.”

Gagne stood with his classmates **Col. Alhassan Abu**, from Ghana, **Col. Maksat Alymov** from Kyrgyzstan, **Col. Ingrid Gjerde** from Norway, **Lt. Col. Hugh McAslan** from New Zealand, and **Col. Shane Gabriel** from Australia, each of whom have served in UN peacekeeping missions.

There are 120,000 peacekeepers serving in 17 missions in some of the most volatile and dangerous environments throughout the world.

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