

Armies and Youth begin the REFORESTATION of planet earth

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Submitted by jim

BLUE HELMET SOLDIERS PLANTING TREES IN BID TO 'GREEN' PLANET
FOUR BILLION TREES IN THE GROUND NOW

Seven billion trees by 2009!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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United Nations peacekeepers are no strangers to working in some of the world's most hazardous regions, and they are now helping out on a new battlefield: combating climate change.

"The care and protection of our environment is everybody's concern," said Lieutenant Colonel Um Bello, who heads the Alpha Company of the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia (["http://unmil.org"](http://unmil.org)>UNMIL).

He is leading his troops in a new exercise: planting 1,000 trees in the country's west this year, as part of the tree-planting campaign of the UN Environment Programme (["http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=593&ArticleID=6254&l=en&t=long"](http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=593&ArticleID=6254&l=en&t=long)>UNEP), which seeks to plant 7 billion trees — or one for every person in the world — by the end of 2009.

"As a contingent, we have resolved to join efforts with the international community" and others to ensure that the war against climate change "is fought, won and our planet Earth is saved," he said.

With the destruction of natural forests emitting more greenhouse gases every year than the transport sector, planting trees — which absorb carbon dioxide and store nearly 300 gigatonnes of carbon in their biomass — is a crucial defence in the fight against global warming.

Blue helmets have already planted nearly 30,000 saplings in 11 peacekeeping missions worldwide, in countries including Timor-Leste, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Georgia and Lebanon.

To date, more than 4 billion trees have been planted, with 169 countries having taken part in UNEP's Billion Tree Campaign. Ethiopia alone has planted 1.4 billion trees, while Turkey has planted 707 million and Mexico has planted 537 million.

For its part, the joint African Union-UN peacekeeping mission in Darfur, known as [UNAMID](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unamid/), has embarked on a scheme to plant 1,000 seedlings at all of its compounds in the war-ravaged Sudanese region by December.

UNEP, which hopes its tree-planting initiative will pressure nations to "seal the deal" on an ambitious new climate change pact this December in Copenhagen, Denmark, planted a tree for each of the more than 10,000 people who signed up for the "Twitter for Trees" initiative on the Internet-based social networking site Twitter by World Environment Day on 5 June.

Groups such as the World Organization of the Scouts Movement, with 28 million members in 160 countries, committed to plant 65,000 trees as well.