



## Gonzalo Daniel Martirene Ruibal

1965 – 2010

Lieutenant Colonel Gonzalo Daniel Martirene Ruibal, a national of Uruguay, was with the Uruguayan Armed Forces deployed to the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Gonzalo pursued an active career in the Uruguayan army and participated in several UN peacekeeping operations. He served successful tours of duty with the UN Angola Verification Mission III (UNAVEM III) from 1996 to 1997, and from 2005 to 2006 was called to manage personnel and logistics in the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In between, he supervised and trained military personnel in his home country. In March 2009 he was called to manage issues related to conduct and welfare of military personnel in MINUSTAH. His term was scheduled to end in March 2010.

In Uruguay, Gonzalo held multiple command and staff positions, including Staff Officer at the National Peacekeeping Coordination Centre and Regimental Commander of the 4th Mechanized Cavalry Regiment.

Even after obtaining two advanced degrees in institutional administration from the universities associated with the Uruguayan Armed Forces, Gonzalo never stopped learning; as recently as 2009, he took courses in human rights and humanitarian relief operations.

Those who knew Gonzalo remembered his boundless energy and passion for life. Even when he had to undergo hardship, he would still help others with great humour.

“As a junior officer, he survived a severe incident in the field in which he received deep burn wounds in most of his body. For many years he had to undergo medical treatment, but this did not stop him from smiling

and helping others whenever they needed him,” one colleague recalled.

“Gonzalo will remain in my heart as kind, sensitive to problems of others, always trying to provide a helping hand and support in times of difficulties and stress,” said one colleague, adding “I will remember his always smiling open face and singing voice.”

Colleagues and friends remembered Gonzalo for his dedication and commitment to maintaining peace in difficult locations, as well as his positive and generous attitude towards them. “In more than 20 years of successful military career he was a friend, a mentor and an outstanding leader,” a colleague said.

“He adapted to the situation and looked at the bright side, giving in return all he had within himself for the cause,” said another. “He was a brave man with gentleman manners and he was very honest, which made him a beacon to everyone who surrounded him.”

At his military burial in the cemetery of Los Fresnos of Carrasco in Montevideo, attended by friends, colleagues and hundreds of soldiers, Gonzalo received posthumous military honours from the Commander-in-Chief of the Uruguayan Army General Jorge Rosales. He was also posthumously promoted by two grades for having fulfilled his duties in serving the UN.

One colleague said, “Let’s remember Gonzalo as he would have liked us to do it –as a friend with a big smile, contagious optimism and outstanding professional skills.”

Gonzalo is survived by his wife Leonor Chiappe and their two sons Gonzalo and Santiago.