



Guillaume Siemienski

1954 – 2010

Guillaume Siemienski, a national of Canada, started working with the UN in 2008 as a Senior Political Affairs Officer for the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) in Tbilisi. He was reassigned to the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in August 2009.

Before joining the UN, Guillaume worked in the Canadian Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism for over ten years. From 2001 to 2005, he worked in Canadian embassies in Moscow, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Turkey. During this period he also went on a few missions for the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) in Europe. In 1999, he was appointed Senior Development Officer at the Canadian International Development Agency.

On 16 January 2010, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper issued a statement on the deaths of Guillaume Siemienski and another Canadian stationed in Haiti. "Their deaths are a reminder of the sacrifice Canadian men and women ... are willing to make in order to bring Canadian generosity and aid to Haiti and the world."

Guillaume was the head of the Messaging Unit in the Political Affairs Division in MINUSTAH and was in charge of reviewing and supervising the production of all speeches, ranging from medal parade speeches to speeches for inaugurations, and daily and weekly situation reports.

His team described him as "a pleasant, jolly colleague" and remembered him for "cracking jokes and laughing loudly during Monday morning team meetings." They said he was "very personable and had a great way of never making you feel supervised."

He always inspired positive energy among his family, friends and colleagues. A friend said, "The house would shake from the energy that he inspired."

"He was the sunniest, most loving person," said his sister.

Guillaume held an Honours Bachelor's degree in Russian and Slavic Studies from McGill University and another degree from Université de Paris III, in Contemporary Soviet Studies. He spoke several languages fluently including English, French, Russian, and Polish, as well as some German.

Guillaume spent most of his life doing humanitarian work. "He truly believed in working towards democracy and human rights," his sister also said.

Guillaume and his wife had just returned to Haiti after a visit to Montréal, where the couple spent the Christmas holidays with their family. At the gathering, he sang a song he composed to describe his life with his wife, Maria Karolina.

Guillaume is survived by his wife, and two sons, Christopher and Martin.