

## Portrait of Nabil Abdelmalek, United Nations Volunteer

He is leaving the Public Information Division after serving for one year and a half within this Division. The Office of the Deputy Director of Mission Support is taking him away from us, but that's for his benefit. Nabil Abdelmalek, the Tunis-born lad who has nothing but praise for his country, Tunisia, has nevertheless adapted well to his in the Congolese capital, Kinshasa. I can remember how, one day during an outing among colleagues, I watched in great



amazement as he executed dance steps worthy of inclusion in the repertoire of the band Viva La Musica of the late Papa Wemba! A real pro, I tell you. One thing is certain, Nabil: if your dear mother does not pray hard enough, she may have to take a plane to come down here to fetch you once you have completed your mission. But putting humour aside, what are your duties and responsibilities within the MONUSCO Public Information Division? ***"Concretely, my role is to provide administrative and logistic support to the Public Information Management. Today, for example, I am participating in the preparatory meeting for the MONUSCO weekly press conference which gives an update on the security and humanitarian situation in the country. With the help of the technical unit, I must also ensure that the press conference takes place in the best possible conditions."*** Not only does he participate in the preparation of the press conference, but he always attends, alongside his colleagues in charge of media relations, to support the smooth running of the conference. In fact, I do believe Nabil would make a good communicator...but he is not interested, and there is nothing I can do about it.

You are going to join the Office of the DDMS – what will be your job and responsibilities there? ***"I will serve as the DDMS Office's focal point in coordinating, with the Human Resources Section, the implementation of the United Nations rules and procedures relating to Human Resources. I will also be part of the team responsible for coordinating with the Administration Units, including the training unit, the contracts management unit, the staff council and the welfare unit. I will also be reviewing and handling all communications addressed to our office and ensuring that responses are provided as soon as possible. In addition, I will be in charge of preparation, control and implementation of the work program, while ensuring the best possible allocation of financial resources in accordance with the Budget, as well as the production of required reports. These are but a few of the duties, but there***

***are other tasks in the terms of reference for the position.***” Hey, it seems to me the DDMS is hell-bent on working you to death! We send you a fresh young man and you want to turn him into an overworked wreck of a man...I can't agree with that. These terms of reference are too much work!

I must admit, however, that Nabil is really skilled in matters pertaining to Human Resources. What has struck me most in him is that he shows a particular interest in his fellow humans. We all tend, for example, to continue tapping on our keyboard as we listen to a colleague speaking to us, or to not look at our interlocutor, or to express through a body language that we want to get out of a conversation and get back to work. But you will never see this gentleman act like that. Each time, - and I know this because I have seen him at work -, Nabil would stop whatever he was doing, smile at you, answer you courteously, assist you with any need, and let you go feeling light-hearted, and whether you insist or not, he would accompany you back. How do you do it? How do you always manage to find time to assist everyone while being “normally” the most stressed-out person as a direct collaborator of the PID Director? Explain to me how you manage this; I want to understand, because as far as I am concerned, when anyone asked me two questions at a time, I implore the Lord.

Nabil, you had a pre-MONUSCO life; I am not referring to your “***past life***” during which you must have been a cheetah or something of the kind, given your walking speed: within 30 seconds, he can be seen in 4 different offices. Why, you operate on premium-grade unleaded gasoline (petrol)! Coffee does not provide such velocity. Well, for the moment, we just want to listen to you; tell us about your professional experience. ***“Before joining the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) as an international UN Volunteer, I worked in the private sector and then for about 4 years within the United Nations Office for Project Support (UNOPS) as a Human Resources special assistant in my country. In parallel to my employment, I provided on-line expertise to help organizations to respond to development challenges through the UNV’s on-line Volunteering service. I thus had the opportunity to write reports for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and to do translations for the UN-Habitat. This enriching experience encouraged me to continue on that path and so I applied for a field volunteer position. After posting my profile online, I received a volunteer service offer to serve as administrative officer for the MONUSCO Public Information Office.”*** In fact, you were already a workaholic!

And that is not all: ***“Moreover, as part of my professional career development plan, I participate in a training and continuous learning program on “Monitoring, Counselling and Coaching”, a pilot project aimed at training UN Volunteers to be mentors providing counselling and support with a view to improving skills among MONUSCO’s national staff. It is worth recalling that we have been deployed in the DRC to share our experience and technical expertise, and it is gratifying for me to be able to participate, on daily basis, in the career development of two members of the Mission.”*** Go on, please;

I see I have a lot to learn from you, my friend. Like, for example, how to stay cool under any circumstances.

Nabil's immediate supervisor, our colleague Théophane Kinda, portrayed him as follows: ***"Professionally, Nabil is the prototype of a colleague who takes pride on a job well done and above all strives to achieve the desired results as quickly as possible. He is a "Volunteer" in every sense of the word. He volunteers to take additional tasks, to assist others, and to work on the weekends. Very often, on the eve of a weekend, he graciously offers to return to the office when there are instances requiring that the work at hand be done within short deadlines. He is an energetic person and a quick worker. In dealing with others, he is always ready to help out and be of service. He could have worked as a police officer. One day, he achieved the feat of recovering my two phones stolen from me on Avenue de la Justice. He did so by tracking the stolen phones via their GPS based tracking system. Nabil is the type of colleague who is always ready to offer his service. He may not solve your problem straight away, but he always proposes to seek out a solution, and in most cases he will come back to you with the solution. An active sportsman, he is a fan of soccer. On several occasions, he has demonstrated his soccer-playing skills with the Okapi soccer team. He usually wears the number 10 jersey and a shot with his left foot will normally leave no chance to the goalkeeper of the opposing team. In our match against the Foreign Affairs Ministry's team last September, Nabil secured the win for the MONUSCO/Okapi team by scoring two wonderful goals."*** Our "Zlatan" indeed dazzled his fans during his last match in which, unfortunately, he was left with an injured knee. Please be more careful next time; you mean much to us, so don't get "zlatanized" like that; you are "Zlatan"!

You will have understood that Nabil is a **"Sunday footballer"** who spends much of his free time kicking a ball around. But he assures me that he also likes to travel: ***"I have visited more than 15 countries, and I have always wanted to travel and explore other parts of the world."*** With whom do you share these moments: ***"I am not married yet, but I may soon take the final step, as I have already found my soulmate, who always and everywhere gives me her support."*** Bad luck for those young single women who were beginning to hope given this young man's pedigree! (Sorry, I'll pretend I didn't say anything and you didn't hear anything). By the way, what does the DRC inspire you: ***"I admire the people, their sympathy and their enjoyment of life...And the lush countryside in which I find a lot of inspiration!"*** Yes Nabil, I too love this luxuriance, it is beautiful everywhere. What have you already visited? ***"I had the opportunity to visit some parks and lakes; and certainly there are plenty of other places to explore."*** Certainly. A piece of friendly advice: On your honeymoon, take your sweetheart to the DRC, you will thank me later...I told you earlier that Nabil would not return home on his own initiative, you can verify this with me: ***"About food, I like chicken with peanut sauce which I heard about even before coming to DRC."*** And who cooks it for you? Hum, Hum... beware of my sharp eyes.