



PRESS RELEASE

Ref No UNAMSIL/PIO/PR/ 182/2004

23 September 2004

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE COMMEMORATED IN THE PROVINCES

Freetown, Sierra Leone – The International Day of Peace -- traditionally observed on 21 September each year -- which was last Friday commemorated in Freetown by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) with UN Agencies and senior Government Ministers gracing the occasion, was equally commemorated in the provinces with activities mainly organized and spearheaded by the Mission's civil affairs officers based in those areas.

In Kailahun town in the eastern province, UNAMSIL seized the opportunity to highlight UNAMSIL's drawdown strategy in the district. And in Koinadugu district in northern Sierra Leone, a range of activities, including a flag raising ceremony, ringing of a peace bell and a match of volleyball between the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), were organized at the Community Centre in Kabala.

Also in the northern district headquarters town of Magburaka, the main activity was a panel discussion at the UNAMSIL Conference Room under the theme "Sustainable Peace as a tool for development in post-war Sierra Leone". Participants, drawn from civil society groups, government ministries, the district council, judiciary, youth groups and UNAMSIL personnel, identified the poor relationship between the RSLAF and SLP as an impediment to sustainable peace and development. While in Port Loko, school children participated in social and cultural activities.

In Bo, the southern provincial headquarters, a procession from the police station to the town hall was held and commemorative statements were delivered by a number of officials. In the evening, members of the SLP and RSLAF played a football match. At Waterloo, west of the capital Freetown, the day was marked with a march past and sporting activities.

In most of the provinces, the commemorative activities were attended by a large cross-section of persons, including local councillors, Government officials, youth organizations, civil society groups, members of the the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), UN Military Observers (MILOBS) and UNAMSIL Civilian Police (CIVPOL).

The highlight of all ceremonies was the delivery by a UNAMSIL representative of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's statement to mark the day.

MEDIA CONTACT: Kemal SAIKI, Chief Public Information, Spokesman

☎ +232-22-295-583 ☎ Mobile +232-076-692-801 Email: saiki@un.org

MEDIA CONTACT: Sharon McPHERSON, Head Media Relations Unit

☎ +232-22-295-136 ☎ Mobile +232-076-757-802 Email: mcpherson1@un.org