



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **DSRSG at Meeting of Leaders, Kissi Parliamentarians from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone**

*Freetown, Sierra Leone* – Leaders and parliamentarians of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone over the weekend met to discuss issues of security in the Mano River basin and the disputed border village of Yenga. Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) for Sierra Leone and Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Mr. J. Victor Angelo also participated in the meeting, which was held in the eastern Koindu town.

At the end of the forum, a communiqué, the “Koindu Declaration”, was signed in which the leaders of the three countries underscored their commitments to ensure peace in the Mano River basin.

Addressing participants, Mr. Angelo assured that the UN country team in Sierra Leone would assist in implementing security initiatives in the Mano River basin. Mechanisms were already in place to control small arms proliferation at the borders of the three countries.

Sierra Leone’s President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, pointing out that there was “no need to be concerned about security among the three countries”, noted that when he visited Guinea recently, President Lansana Conte had remarked publicly on Guinean television that Yenga belonged to Sierra Leone.

The Prime Minister of Guinea, Mr. Seilieu Diallo, reiterated that there was no conflict between Sierra Leone and Guinea. He promised that his country would support pertinent points in the “Koindu Declaration” and emphasized that Guinea had so far supported efforts to strengthen peace in the sub-region.

Liberian interim chairman, Gyude Bryant said about a year ago it would have been unheard of for a Liberian leader to visit Sierra Leone. He urged those who were in the habit of crossing the borders with small arms to stop.

Earlier, Speaker of the Sierra Leone parliament, Justice Edmond Cowan noted that the occurrence of such an event should be a continuous process, not only in the Mano River Union, but in Africa as a whole.

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