



PRESS RELEASE

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SENIOR SECURITY FORCES OFFICERS BEGIN TRAINING ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ETHICS

Freetown, Sierra Leone – A four-day training seminar for senior officers of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) high command on police ethics, human rights and rule of law in democracy began today at Mammy Yoko headquarters of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). Also participating are members of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and Office of National Security.

In opening remarks, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Sierra Leone, Ambassador Daudi N. Mwakawago stressed that the Mission was holding such events to enhance police professionalism so the force would not lapse to the old order when police used arbitrary powers in the discharge of its duties leading to violations of human rights.

“When police officials are seen to respect, uphold and defend human rights, public confidence is built and community cooperation is fostered. The police are seen as part of the community, performing valuable social functions which bring them closer to the community, putting them in a position to prevent and solve crime through proactive policing,” the SRSG stated.

Earlier, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative, Mr. J. Victor Angelo said the purpose of targeting senior security forces officials was to ensure a positive impact on the behaviour and attitudes of senior advisers on Government law enforcement strategy and policies. The success of the seminar would be judged by the extent to which law enforcement institutional strategies and policies progressively reflected human rights and rule of law imperatives taught during the course.

He acknowledged the roles of UNAMSIL, the British Department for International Development (DFID) and UNDP, among others, in assisting in the recruitment for the SLP.

Also making remarks this morning was Minister of Internal Affairs, George Banda Thomas, who stressed that the Government was committed to reformation of the national security sector.

The seminar will end on Friday March 4.
