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PRESS RELEASE

**FORCE COMMANDER BIDS FAREWELL
TO NIGERIAN BATTALION 14**

Freetown – The Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), Major General Sajjad Akram, on Saturday, 25 October 2003 bade farewell to Nigerian Battalion (NIBATT) 14 peacekeepers who are leaving Sierra Leone after completing their 12-month tour of duty.

In his address to the men and women from NIBATT 14, the Force Commander thanked them for a job well done throughout their year-long stay in the Mission area. He commended the soldiers led by Commanding Officer, Colonel Yonana John Gaje for their “commitment, dedication and high professional skills”, adding that NIBATT 14 had been “one of [his] strongest assets” in manning UNAMSIL Sector West. The FC further acknowledged the Republic of Nigeria’s “tremendous” contribution towards peacebuilding in West Africa, and in Sierra Leone in particular.

NIBATT 14 joined UNAMSIL in October 2002 and was deployed in Freetown and its peninsula. The battalion’s responsibilities included guarding Government of Sierra Leone’s buildings, the capital’s entry points and vulnerable locations throughout the peninsula. NIBATT 14 will rotate between 28 October and 3 November 2003.

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