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PRESS RELEASE

CIVPOL COMMISSIONER MEETS WITH COMMISSSIONER OF BOTSWANA POLICE

Freetown – The Commissioner of UNAMSIL Civilian Police (CIVPOL), Hudson Benzu, and his Senior Management team today meet with the Commissioner of Botswana Police, Edwin Batshu, and his entourage at the UNAMSIL's Video Conference in Freetown.

Commissioner Benzu, after introducing senior members of his team, gave a brief background of CIVPOL's operations, noting that 24 countries contributed police officers to CIVPOL. He spoke about his unit's activities with the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), adding that, "Sierra Leone has improved greatly and has acquired professional international standards of policing."

The CIVPOL Commissioner stated that their programs implementation was due to "the free hand given to them by UNAMSIL", and that they were also working with the Commonwealth.

Responding, the Botswana Police Commissioner, Edwin Batshu, disclosed that what he has seen is the opposite of his pre-conception of crimes in a country coming out of war. Commissioner Batshu who had earlier been briefed by the Inspector General of the Sierra Leone Police expressed delight and appreciation with the style of community policing in Sierra Leone, adding that the free movement he saw in the country was not seen in Botswana.

Commissioner Batshu stated that, "decentralization is something that is really good for this country," adding that what he saw was a "clear manifestation that CIVPOL has done a lot in Sierra Leone." He also noted that the rehabilitation and rebuilding of police posts and stations nationwide showed "the commitment of friends of Sierra Leone" towards its development and disclosed that he had asked the Inspector General of the Sierra Leone Police to visit Botswana so that he could look at areas where that country could help. A highlight of the meeting was the exchange of gifts.

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